

SAINT PAULS.

JUNE, 1868.

FOR A YEAR.

"WANTED, as Companion and Finishing Governess for a Young Lady, a person who is thoroughly competent to teach German and Italian, and the harp. Salary, £100 a year. Address Q. S. L., Post-office, Risdon, —shire." I wanted a situation, and believed myself to be "thoroughly competent" to impart the accomplishments specified in the above advertisement. I read it in the first edition of the "Times" one Monday morning about two o'clock, as I sat eating my luncheon in the dusky background of that most convenient haunt for governesses and other unprotected ladies, the confectioner's at the corner where Oxford and Regent Streets cross each other. I had been all the morning drawing from the life in a well-known studio in Newman Street,—one of a miscellaneous group who were pursuing art, more or less industriously, for more or less disinterested reasons.

My own pursuit of art I may as well acknowledge at once was not very earnest. I was "doing a little in oils," I always said at home when I was questioned as to my progress, and I had the satisfaction of looking down upon my sisters as I said it. They only blended colours and portrayed form in Berlin wool on canvas.

The truth is, that home life to the majority of young women of my status in society is a very dull thing. My father is a medical man, practising at Brompton, making a good income, living in very good style, and withal educating his children thoroughly well. My two brothers are University men, and were intended for the learned professions, and my two sisters and myself, after being well grounded by a clergyman in England, had been given four years abroad,—two in Germany and two in a French convent near Paris.

We all had "resources within ourselves," as the conventional phrase has it. That is to say, culture had taught us to appreciate good literature, nature had given us great musical talent which careful scientific instruction had developed well, and we were all adepts in the art of so arranging our household-gods as to put them in a fair light before other people. Still, I the eldest and most restless-natured of the three, felt that I needed something more to make life full enough for me. I wanted to do something with the time that remained over

and above to me, when I had read and played and visited till I was tired.

I had been a student at the atelier in Newman Street about five months when this advertisement which I have copied came upon me like a revelation. In an instant I resolved to follow the path it pointed out. I would be that governess-companion, and utilise my knowledge of German and Italian, and the harp. I had often wished to get out of London : now, the opportunity was given me, and I would go.

I was in a small flush of excitement when I determined on this. Delays are dangerous. I would write at once. I would not wait to go home and discuss my project in family council. So I paid for my luncheon, bought a sheet of paper and an envelope, and sat down again in the midst of that army of educational martyrs who congregate at this shop, to write an application for the situation advertised.

It has never been in my nature to vacillate,—to put my hand to the plough, and then draw back because the ground to be traversed is rough or dangerous. As soon as I had penned my application, I felt that I was bound in honour to myself to stand the consequences of it. If they would have me, I was pledged to go,—although my letter was not posted yet.

It was a sultry July day this one on which I made my first effort to “do something,” and a feeling of idleness, languor, and general disinclination to go back to the close, stuffy studio possessed me when I had finished my letter. Though I could hardly have given a reason, I felt justified in being idle for the remainder of this day. I think the feeling arose from my having taken steps towards being so uncommonly industrious for an indefinite period in the matter of this governess-companionship business.

The room in which I sat and the shop in front of it, teemed with members of the class to which I aspired just now to belong. The earnest aspiration caused me to regard them more curiously than I had ever done before, and I fell to speculating whether that indelible stamp which marked them daughters of mental toil, would ever be impressed on my brow as it was on theirs. There were many types of this great order there. Daily governesses, drawing mistresses, teachers of singing, teachers of music ; German, French, and Englishwomen ; they were all there mixed up in this place, day after day, during their hour of freedom, yet utter strangers to one another at last as at first.

I fancied, being young, imaginative, and self-satisfied, that I had no inconsiderable insight into character in those days ;—that I could read who and what these people were in their faces, manners, and customs. The middle-aged woman in the corner reading the leading article in the “Daily Telegraph,” and making a hearty luncheon of beef and stout, could be nothing, I decided, but a singing-mistress ; no one else would so recklessly venture upon so stupifying a beverage at that hour of the day ; and looking at her face, I made out a little story to fit it, and told myself that she must have been a concert-singer once,—and

pretty about the same time; that her soft brown hair and eyes, and pale, fair, smiling, composed face, had won the love of some one who wanted to marry and could not support her; that she had married him, as thousands of women do, for companionship, protection, as some one to care for her as years creep on, and because she would not be called an old maid;—and that now he was ill, or not doing anything remunerative, and she was teaching singing to support herself, and doing it cheerfully.

Leaving her to her leading article, her beef and stout, my gaze sought a pair who were at the same long table with myself,—evidently a mother and daughter. The mother was a wisp of a woman in rusty black, with a pale sorrowing face; the daughter was a delicate-looking girl, of about nineteen or twenty, a pretty exotic-looking creature, like a foreign white lily. They were both turning over the papers that lay upon the table when I looked at them first, and after a while the daughter's eye fell on the same advertisement that had attracted my attention. Her face grew crimson and her eyes brightened as she hastily handed it to her mother with the words,—

“Shall I try for it?”

“It is one more chance,” the sad mother answered tenderly. And when I knew they wished for it, I was sorry that I was pledged myself to try for the situation. Opposite to this mother and daughter who had enlisted my sympathies, sat a girl of about three or four-and-twenty, in whose manner there was that unmistakable mixture of the corrective and instructive air that permeates so many of the women whose mission in life it is to form the manners and the mind of the rising generation. “Shall I lose my individuality while I am with these people near Risdon?” I mentally asked myself. The thought of failing in my attempt, of being refused, never entered into my calculations for a moment. “Shall I ever lower my voice and sober my bearing with that odious involuntary humility which used to oppress me so much in my own governesses? What will be the experience of my year of tuition, I wonder?” So I soliloquised until the clock struck three. The crowd had nearly dispersed to their accustomed avocations, and I rose and walked away leisurely to a cab that conveyed me home.

I need scarcely say that as mine was an entirely unlooked-for scheme, so was it entirely disapproved of by all the members of my own family. My father said that he liked to have all his girls about him of an evening. My mother added that “Life was full of temptations to young people, especially young women, and she should never know a happy moment while I was away with these strangers.” And my sisters half envied and half blamed me for going away from the monotonous routine that could, in their estimation, be interrupted with propriety only by marriage.

However, to cut a long story short, I adhered to my plan, and when the advertiser wrote to me to accept my offer of service, I proceeded to carry out that plan without delay by starting off at once to the Risdon railway-station, where a carriage was to meet and carry me to my new home.

My father and mother both saw me safely to the Great Western terminus, and bade me farewell with a few tears and a great many prognostications of my finding things at Wearham Chase duller than I should be able to endure. "If you do, you'll think of what I have always said, that home is the proper place for young girls," my mother said, kissing me. "If you do, you'll know where to come," my father continued, following her example. And I laughed happily, and told them, "Let what would happen, I would stand it for a year." Then we parted, and for an hour or two I indulged myself unrestrainedly in a fit of natural depression. But at mid-distance my youth and the elasticity of my temperament triumphed, together with the conviction I had that I was doing the right thing in endeavouring to help myself.

It was about five o'clock in the afternoon when the train stopped, and I heard the guard shout out "Risdon!" In a few minutes I and my luggage were planted on the platform, the train was whirling on, and a servant in a plain, grey livery was asking me if I "was Miss Archer." My response in the affirmative was corroborated by the tickets on my trunk; so directing a porter to shoulder the latter, this servant respectfully showed me the way out from the station to the road, where a handsome carriage and a pair of bay horses were awaiting me.

"How far is it to Wearham Chase?" I asked, as I took my seat, and the man replied "Six miles." "It must be in the heart of the country, indeed," I thought. To be six miles from a railway-station was a more delightfully secluded fate than I had ever hoped would be mine. And in such a lovely land as this appeared to be, with its wealth of verdure and water, of hill and valley. It was a fate to rejoice in, and I rejoiced accordingly.

I have reason to know that six good English miles do lie between Risdon station and Wearham Chase. But on the occasion of my first travelling over the road, the magical influence of the fresh, beautiful country was over me so strongly, that we seemed to be upon the grounds of the Chase as soon as we were clear of the environs of the railway-station. We entered the grounds through a sufficiently imposing gateway that was placed at the angle of two roads. There was a well-kept piece of turf outside the gates,—a piece of turf that gave wayfarers a hint as to the nature of the land within. One portion of it was shaded by a fine willow, the others were studded with a whitethorn, an australian, and a shapely, glossy-leaved holly. I had barely time to take in the promise these shrubs gave of green-

ness in winter, before the gates,—or doors rather, for they were of solid wood,—swung open, and we rolled into an avenue that wound along for a mile at least under the shade of fine old elms.

Long before this time intense curiosity as to the people with whom I had come to sojourn for a year claimed me for its own. I must confess to having been possessed with a raging impatience to see them and the house. I kept on putting my head out, first at one window, then at the other, warily, lest I should be detected in the undignified act. At length the trees ceased to overshadow the drive, which wound round in a grand sweep to the front of a large, lofty, many-windowed mansion of red bricks,—the sort of house that old English gentlemen who had a fine estate did build for themselves in the golden days of good Queen Anne.

A clock that was placed in the wall above the entrance-door struck six as I got out of the carriage and passed into the hall, where I was met by a lady whom I at once put down in my own mind as the housekeeper. She was an old, quiet, gentle-faced lady, in dark grey silk, with a massive gold chatelain hanging at her side, from which depended a few keys in token of her calling. She gave me a grave yet gracious welcome, took me up to a beautifully-furnished bedroom, and promised to send a servant to help me to prepare for the seven o'clock dinner, for which the family were already dressing. When she had done this she walked with a hesitating step to the door, but came back directly to the couch on which I had seated myself, to say,—"You look almost as young as your pupil, Miss Archer; it will be a pleasant surprise to her to see you what you are."

"Why?" I asked, laughing, and then added, "Please tell me your name; I ought not to remain ignorant of the name of my first friend at Wearham Chase."

"I am Mrs. Digby, the housekeeper," she replied; and then she went on to tell me that she had lived at Wearham Chase in her present capacity for the last ten years only, but that she had known the family all her life, her father having been their solicitor, and her husband land agent to the late Mr. Hazelwood, the present proprietor's brother.

"And is Miss Hazelwood,—my pupil that is to be,—their only daughter?" I asked.

"Your pupil is not a Miss Hazelwood; she is not their daughter, but my mistress's niece," Mrs. Digby said. "She is a Miss Verney, but she's made quite as much of by master and every one else as if she was a child of the house. If she guessed what you were like she would have been to see you before this," the housekeeper continued, laughing; "but she's very high-spirited, and the plan of having a governess didn't please her."

"Who planned it, then?" I asked.

"Mr. and Mrs. Hazelwood thought it best that Miss Verney should

have full occupation for a year," Mrs. Digby said, gravely, and I repeated after her,—

"For a year! why that is just as long as I hope to stay here; our plans seem to agree wonderfully well." Then I made greater haste than usual to dress, without paying any attention to the look of surprised horror with which the excellent retainer of the house of Hazelwood regarded the stranger who made such daringly light mention of the arrangements of that high and mighty race.

I was only just dressed when the dinner bell rang. Mrs. Hazelwood, I heard, was "waiting for me in the drawing-room." So, ushered by Mrs. Digby, to the drawing-room I went. A tall, fair, pale woman, with an exceedingly graceful figure and manner, rose and advanced courteously to make me welcome as Mrs. Digby mentioned my name. She held out her hand to me, said a few kind words, by which she made me understand that she was both glad to see me, and glad to see me what I was, and then rang the bell, and desired that Miss Verney should be asked to come to us at once.

When the door closed behind the servant who went on this mission, Mrs. Hazelwood turned to me again, and said hurriedly,—

"Miss Archer, before I even introduce my niece and you to each other, let me bespeak your interest in her, and forbearance towards her. She is not much younger than you are. She has been petted, prized, and indulged all her life. She is peculiarly situated; she has been most severely tried; these circumstances combined, have rendered her less patient and considerate than we could desire to see her. Be kind to her," she continued hurriedly, as the door opened, and a young lady came hastily into the room.

As she came swiftly across the floor towards the chair in which Mrs. Hazelwood had seated herself abruptly when the door opened, I had time to see that she was a beautiful, graceful young creature. Her face had the delicate oval, and the exquisite, straight, chiselled nose of a Greek statue. Her bright golden hair was drawn back from her forehead under black velvet fillets, and raised up high behind, in an enormous chignon. The proportions of her splendid figure were well displayed in a full, long dress of soft white llama. She was both a statuesque and a fashionable-looking beauty; and I began to wonder what I was to teach this belle, who was a woman grown.

"I heard that you wanted me, Aunt Emily," she began, without so much as glancing towards me; "what is it?"

Her voice was young and fresh, rich and full, but there was a jarring chord somewhere. It did not sound contented.

"I want to introduce you to Miss Archer, dear Isabel," Mrs. Hazelwood replied; and I fancied that I detected a conciliatory strain in the elder lady's tone, as she addressed the younger one. Miss Verney turned slightly towards me, and made a cold, but perfectly graceful inclination of the head. She was evidently

disposed to regard me as an interloper, an inferior, and a nuisance generally; and I had not the slightest intention of being so regarded by her.

"You did not expect to find Miss Archer what she is, did you?" Mrs. Hazelwood asked cheerfully.

"No; I did not," the girl answered slowly, scrutinising my countenance closely the while.

"And I did not expect to find you what you are, when I so hastily answered the advertisement, or I should not have had the presumption to do so," I said laughing. And then her beautiful mouth dimpled at the corners, the lips parted, her little white teeth glittered, and her whole face was transformed by a smile.

"I can only hope that neither governess nor pupil are disagreeably surprised," Mrs. Hazelwood said, with a relieved air. Then, as the servant threw open the door, the mistress of the house added, "Your uncle will not be home to-night, Isabel; we dine alone."

Before dinner was over, I had become interested in both my companions. The elder lady was very kind to me,—not in the oppressively kind, largely superior manner which is conventionally ascribed to ladies in some three-volume records of governesses' woes, but kind in a way that made me feel glad that I had obeyed my impulse, and answered her advertisement. The young lady appealed to me still more strongly. She was charming, cultivated, fascinating. But every now and then there crept into her manner, and into her face, some of that same discontent which I had observed in her voice when she first spoke on entering the drawing-room. This shade of dissatisfaction deepened when dinner was over, and we had gone back to the drawing-room. For a time she talked to me,—of my life in Germany, of my home life; of the dulness of this country life of hers, surrounded as it was with beauties; of new books and new operas, and new music generally. She talked gaily enough of all these things, for a time.

But only for a short time. Before the lamp was lighted, while the window was still open to admit the soft twilight, and the softer summer air, her mood changed, and she grew so silent and sad, that I found myself watching her white, thoughtful face with pity. Her aunt saw me doing this, I think, for she said quickly,—“Sing me something, Miss Archer, to the harp, will you? it will be such a treat for me to hear the harp again.”

I went over to the harp and tried it. It was in perfect order, and I asked,—“Who keeps it in tune, Mrs. Hazelwood? Harp-strings will not bear neglect; I should have thought this was well attended to.”

“Because I have had a tune on it to-day,” Mrs. Hazelwood replied. “It is Isabel’s instrument; but she gave it up after a few lessons.”

“Why did you do that?” I asked, as I sat down, and drew the harp towards me. She was lounging gracefully on a couch near me,

and as she turned her face to me to give her answer, I saw that the sadness had vanished, and that her face was dimpled with smiles.

"Because,—because it bored me, as most other things did about that same time. I was sick and weary of the world and all in it; and as I couldn't 'sing to the harp with a psalm of thanksgiving,' I wouldn't sing at all."

"Isabel!" her aunt said reproachfully; shocked at the light manner in which Miss Isabel had made her quotation. I thought that the best thing I could do would be to sing, and so stop the conversation. Accordingly, I commenced, and had the satisfaction of feeling, when my song was half over, that half my audience had wearied of it. Miss Verney had sauntered out through the open window on to the terrace.

"Miss Archer," Mrs. Hazelwood said in a low tone, as soon as my strain was over, "I do hope that my niece will repose confidence in you. I am sure that it will do her good. Try to win her to do it."

"I will try, if you wish me to do so," I replied.

"And you will succeed if you try. I feel sure of that. We do love her so dearly," the lady went on energetically, "and we have been so unhappy about her unhappiness, so fearful that we may not have done everything for the best!"

"What are you saying, Aunt Emily?" Miss Verney asked, suddenly stepping back into the room. "Don't waste your time in here any longer. Come out and look along the beech-tree avenue; it looks grand to-night."

It did look grand that night;—that double row of beeches on either side of a luxuriantly fern-bordered broad grass walk. It led away from an old disused terrace at some short distance from the house,—a terrace, the mere contemplation of which brought back hoop and farthingale; talk about Addison, Steele, "Old Sarah," the arrogant pretensions of the great Dutch hero, and other topics that were current when that old terrace was new.

In front of it ran a low castellated wall, and at intervals along this wall marble vases, stiff, but shapely in form, were placed. Many of them were mutilated, but in spite of being thus defaced, they were fair objects in the warm moonlight of that glorious July night.

"The beech-tree avenue is the glory of Wearham Chase," Miss Verney said, when we had stood looking into its depths from the end of the terrace for some time. "As you are a stranger, seeing it for the first time, you ought to know the position it takes among avenues. It is quite in the front ranks of the noble army of avenues. I hope you are impressed with it, Miss Archer."

The young lady spoke with a little laughing air of scorn of that which she was extolling in words. I observed this, and at the same time observed that her manner pained her aunt. So I answered her as though she had spoken in honest earnest, and said,——"This beech-

tree avenue might be the glory of a king's park. I am impressed with it; but words must always be inadequate to convey such impressions from one to another."

Miss Verney shrugged her shoulders. "What a pity Uncle James is not here to hear Miss Archer," she said, turning to Mrs. Hazelwood. Then she clasped her light scarf round her closely, and said hurriedly,—“Well, I'm getting very cold, but I won't insist on your feeling a chill. Good night, dear Aunt Emily; good night, Miss Archer. You will find me your most obedient pupil to-morrow, but to-night I claim the liberty of the subject, and shall go off to bed now at once."

She was gone from us almost before I had time to say "good night," and we were left alone on the steps at the end of the terrace looking along the beech-tree avenue in embarrassed silence. Presently, after the lapse of a minute or two, Mrs. Hazelwood spoke. "Miss Archer," she said energetically, "do strive to win Isabel's confidence; do not be discouraged by what you have seen of her to-night; I had high hopes, great expectations of possible good, when I advertised for an intelligent and cultivated companion for her. I think you will more than realise them. God grant you patience." "Can the young lady be mad," I thought, but I said nothing, and Mrs. Hazelwood went on;—"We have no children of our own, and our love for her, and pride in her, are very great; too great perhaps; yet with all our care we have not been able to avert bitter misery from her, and I fear there is more in store for her. I will not tell you what it is yet, as I hope she may open her heart to you. I am sure you will have a healthy influence over her."

"You are very kind to say so," I replied, scarcely knowing what to reply.

"Not kind," the lady went on in an agitated tone; "I am perhaps a little too candid; but Isabel is so precious to me, a childless woman, that I am apt to lose judgment about her, and both to conceal and to lay bare too much concerning her. But it is getting chilly; we will go in." We went in, and after a little more conversation on indifferent topics, and a little more music, and some light refreshment, we went to bed, without seeing anything more of Miss Verney for that night. The next morning I came to a definite understanding with my employer as to what I was expected to teach my pupil. I learnt that I was to be ready "to bear with her at all times." That "was all," Mrs. Hazelwood said imploringly. "The German and French and harp might amuse her sometimes, but what she wants is companionship of a—of a—of a similar kind to yours, I am sure, my dear Miss Archer," Mrs. Hazelwood said, finishing off with a complimentary generality.

All this promised pleasantness and ease enough;—rather too much ease, in fact; for at first I did not at all incline to the state of salaried idleness to which I was condemned by Miss Verney's caprice, and Mrs. Hazelwood's indulgence of it. But after a time I became so com-

pletely one of the family, that I took my large share of the goods that were provided quite complacently, and never strove to teach Isabel to do more than love me.

I had been there about three months before I got hold of any sort of clue as to the reason of Isabel's uncertain demeanour, and the Hazelwoods' strange surrendering of themselves to it. The girl was evidently idolised by her aunt, and very much considered, loved, and indulged by her uncle. Still at times there would be in her manner towards them such a burst of untoward discontent and dissatisfaction, that if I had not begun to love her dearly, I should have held her very much to blame. But at the close of a bright, beautiful, ruddy and golden October day, Isabel asked me to go and sit in her dressing-room with her, before the hour of dressing for dinner. It was a charmingly pretty as well as an exceedingly comfortable room. Two sides of the walls were panelled with mirrors; the third held a capacious wardrobe between the windows; the fourth was occupied by the fireplace, on one side of which was the entrance to her bedroom, screened by day with heavily falling curtains; the other side of the fireplace was taken up with a huge dressing-table, in the centre of which swung a cheval glass. There were easy-chairs, a low ottoman, a couch, and one or two fancifully shaped tables. On this special evening the room looked specially pretty, for a small char-wood fire burnt on the grate, and on one of the fanciful tables tea and thin bread-and-butter, served in the rarest Dresden, stood ready prepared for us.

As soon as I was installed in one of the easiest chairs, with a cup of tea in my hand, Miss Verney began;—"I have never liked to ask you before, but I will now, Miss Archer. Do you;—has my aunt said anything,—or has Mrs. Digby told you anything about me?"

She asked in a hesitating, affectedly careless manner, that was not natural to her. I saw that her face had flushed a good deal, and that she was trying to read the truth in my eyes, without exactly meeting them. However, I wished to meet her gaze fully before I answered. Then I said, "They have never either of them said more to me about you than this,—that you are very dear to them both, and that Mr. and Mrs. Hazelwood prize you as their own child, and value your happiness above their own. Is there more to tell?"

I asked the question frankly, and frankly she answered me, as she placed herself in the chair opposite to me;—"Only this;—that I am engaged to be married."

"Really! And soon? No, they never hinted at that great fact. I wish you joy, Isabel, with all my heart."

"And with all my heart I thank you for the wish, and believe it will be realised," she said heartily. "So they have never told you? And I have been half angry the whole time you have been here, fancying that they had."

"Why should you be angry at my hearing of your happiness?"

"Because—; oh! it's so tedious to give reasons; because it's in the future, and because third people always make a bungle of such matters when they try to unravel them for the benefit of a fourth."

"Shall you be married soon?"

"In about eight months from now. It was to help me to bear this year of engagement patiently that they secured you as my companion. And really, Helen, as good uncle would have it, I couldn't have had a dearer one. Are you engaged?" I told her that I had not the honour of being so, and asked her where her future husband was, and what was his name and occupation. "His name is Boulding;—Gerald Boulding, of Clanmere, one of the finest places in the country, about twenty miles from here; his health has been, not bad, but not quite good for the last six months, and he's on the Continent. You're sure you never heard of him?"

"Quite sure."

"Never heard of his being here, at Wearham Chase, at all?"

"Never," I replied.

"Ah," she said, with a relieved air. "I made sure that dear old Digby had been babbling. I'm delighted to find that she has not. And Aunt Emily has not spoken of him either?"

"Indeed she has not," I said, thinking the while that it would have been only natural if some one had mentioned to me the current engagement and approaching marriage of the one who was the centre of all interest at Wearham Chase. Having broken the ice, Miss Verney enlarged upon the theme as only a woman can enlarge upon a theme that is dear to her. She told me that she had not seen Mr. Boulding for nearly five months; that he would remain away until April, when he would return, and set about the alterations that were to be made at Clanmere for the reception of its mistress;—and that in June,—in the month of roses,—they were to be married. "But there are dull, dreary months to be lived through before my wedding-day comes," she said, at the end of a long, loving account which she had given me of him. "There is a weary time to be passed in some way or other, before Gerald comes back in April. Oh, dear! oh, dear! I suppose we had better dress for dinner, Helen, and not bewail the inevitable any longer just now."

I got up to go away to my own room at the hint; but before I went I said, "You are a happier girl than I thought you even, Isabel. I have always believed your position to be a most enviable one; but through ignorance I underrated its attractions."

She shook her head despondingly. "I am not half as happy as you are, Helen, in spite of it all;—but it's no use complaining. I can't mend matters," she said, turning away to one of the glasses. "These months of anxiety and suspense are altering me," she added impatiently, as she looked at the reflection of her fair young face. "Gerald will not find me improved if he does;—when he does—come back."

From this time Miss Verney spoke freely to me on the subject. Once or twice she mentioned having heard from Mr. Boulding. She showed me a ring, a rare intaglio, that he had sent her from Florence, and consulted me about her trousseau. "Aunt Emily says it will be quite time enough to set about ordering it when Gerald comes back to England," she said to me one day; "but I should like to begin at once. There will be so much to do."

"But it can surely be done in a couple of months," I said, laughing. "Remember the old adage, Isabel, 'There's many a slip'—"

"How I detest vulgar old proverbs," she replied angrily, and dropped the subject of the trousseau for a week or two.

Soon after this Mrs. Hazelwood spoke of Mr. Boulding to me for the first time. She mentioned him merely as one of the great county men; and so in order that there might not be any misunderstanding between us, and that she might not suspect me of undue reserve, I told her that Isabel had mentioned her engagement to me. Mrs. Hazelwood watched me anxiously while I was making this communication, and when I closed it she said;—"I am very very glad that Isabel has of her own accord told you so much, Miss Archer. I hoped before this that she would have told you more; the reason James and I have been so reserved on the point is that we wished Isabel to tell you herself; you had heard nothing of it before, had you?" I assured her that I had not heard anything of it before, and could not help wondering why they made a mystery of what promised to be such a good match for Isabel. However, I learnt no more just then, for, after expressing a hope that her niece would still further confide in me, and that I might prove, when this confidence was made, the judicious friend they expected me to be, Mrs. Hazelwood resumed her reserve.

Time went on, and April was close at hand. I must state here that it struck me as strange that Miss Verney's engagement was never alluded to in the society of the neighbourhood. The Hazelwoods entertained and visited a great deal, and their beautiful niece was evidently regarded as an acquisition wherever she appeared. But no notice was ever taken of her being a betrothed, and no one ever named Mr. Boulding before her. At length Mrs. Hazelwood solved this mystery for me. Their kindness and consideration for me had won from me in return a very genuine regard and affection for the whole family. They were conscious of this, and made me feel that they were glad of it. It was early in April, a day or two before Mr. Boulding was expected home, that Mrs. Hazelwood enlightened me as to the cause of Isabel's disquiet. "I could have wished she had told you everything herself," the dear old lady said with a sigh; "but as she has not, I will. The fact is, her uncle and I don't quite like Mr. Boulding, or quite approve of the marriage."

"Why not?" I asked in surprise.

"It's a long story, but I will tell it briefly," she replied. "Gerald Boulding has been the best match in the county ever since he came of age; so that when three years ago he proposed to Isabel every one congratulated and envied us. We were very proud and pleased ourselves, for,—though married or single she will have the same portion from my husband as he would have given a daughter,—it was a brilliant marriage for her. There had been rumours of wildness and dissipation, but there are such about many young men. We had even heard a word of an attachment of long years to some one whom our dear child ought never to have succeeded. But we were made to disregard all these things by his protestations, and Isabel's love for him. Two years ago they were to have been married; everything was ready,—the guests invited,—the day named in the local papers,—the poor child in such a blaze of unclouded happiness as she cannot know again,—when a cruel blow fell. A messenger came one night from Clanmere with a letter to Mr. Hazelwood. It was from Gerald Boulding, stating that he was obliged to go abroad,—that untoward circumstances prevented his marrying at the time appointed, but that he hoped to come back in a few weeks and explain himself, and win Isabel's forgiveness. Think of the scandal at the time! Think of how it deepened when, instead of weeks, he stayed away months! At last, when he did come back, we used all the power our love gave us over Isabel to induce her to have nothing more to do with him. We failed. She forgave him, though he gave no proper explanation of his conduct, and we were obliged to give our consent to the renewal of the engagement, if he stood the test of constancy he himself proposed,—namely, time and absence from her. He now professes to have stood that test, and is coming back, as you know, to be married in June."

"She must be very fond of him," I said.

"She is devoted to him," Mrs. Hazelwood replied; "badly as he behaved to her. She has only lived, I verily believe, on the thought of being united to him. Her uncle and I wanted to take her out of the neighbourhood, but she would not go. She said it would look as if she were ashamed either of him or of herself. Then her spirits got low, and her temper variable; and we advertised, and you came, and you know the rest. I assure you I have often trembled to think of the effects suspense and doubt would have on her."

"It will soon be over now," I said cheerfully; and Mrs. Hazelwood sighed heavily as she replied,—

"It will indeed."

In a few days the recreant lover came; and when I saw him I could not wonder at Isabel having been lenient. He was refined, polished, cultivated, handsome, debonair in manner, and devoted to his betrothed. He loaded her with attentions and with rich gifts. He hurried on the alterations at Clanmere, and the bridal preparations at

Wearham Chase. Once more the day was fixed and the guests invited. Isabel was in a perfect blaze of happiness. Even the Hazelwoods could not refuse to be cordial and pleased with a man who made life so bright a thing to their darling niece. The trousseau and the cake arrived,—the first was all that the heart of woman could desire, the second all that the art of confectionery could achieve. All the spare bedrooms in the house were strewn with rich silks and costly laces. The wedding-dress itself was a marvel of white satin and lace; the myrtle-wreath, the long veil, the bridal bouquets, all were perfect; and Isabel called upon me a dozen times a day to say that they were so.

The wedding-day came. The marriage was to take place at half-past eleven, and at ten minutes to that hour I came from Isabel's room for the first time that morning, and went down-stairs. Mr. Boulding was to have come to the house, but he had not arrived. It was surmised that he had gone to the church; so a couple of messengers were despatched there to see if the surmise was correct. Minutes slipped by. I returned to Isabel, who was momentarily expecting to be summoned. She asked me some question about Gerald, and I told her what we thought, "that he had gone straight to the church." Her face grew very white, and she walked to the window which commanded a view of the beech-tree avenue, and gazed along its shaded vista with her eyes flashing and her lips quivering with excitement. "He would come this way,—it's the nearest road to Clanmere," she said, after a few minutes' silent watch. "Helen, go down and hear what uncle and Aunt Emily think we had better do. I will go down to the church; he may be there."

"Wait a minute," I pleaded; "we shall hear directly Mr. Boulding arrives." Then, not daring to disobey her, I went to speak to the Hazelwoods, much as I dreaded leaving Isabel alone. I found the Hazelwoods in a room by themselves. They had come away from those of the guests who had assembled according to invitation before the ceremony at Wearham.

"I could not face the gathering doubt which I saw growing amongst them," Mrs. Hazelwood said, excitedly; "I can't go and speak to that poor child. James, what can we do?"

"Nothing," Mr. Hazelwood said sternly. "We can only wait for a while,—not for long."

"Will you send to Clanmere to make inquiries?" Mrs. Hazelwood asked in a deprecating voice, after a short time.

"Certainly not," he replied; and then I went back sadly to Isabel's room.

She had become violently excited. It was now twenty minutes past twelve. I had no comfort to give her. "Are they going to send to Clanmere?" she asked impatiently, turning round sharply upon me as I approached her.

"No," I answered, in a faltering voice. "Your uncle thinks he had better not."

"Then Uncle James thinks,—oh, Heaven help me!—what does he think, Helen?" she cried. And as she spoke the tears fell down upon her cheeks, and rolled in large drops down upon the fleecy lace and glistening satin. "My heart will burst if this goes on much longer. I have been so tried. I have borne so much for him. He should have spared me this!" She broke into a passionate wail of woe as she said this, and flung herself down upon the couch, crushing her veil and wreath,—writhing in the agony of love and doubt, of dread and shame, that possessed her. I would not let my own tears fall. I could do nothing that could soothe her. All I could do was to put my cold hand on her fevered one, and press it lovingly.

Suddenly she started erect. "Helen," she began, "I have told you much, but not all about Gerald;—once before he deceived me, and I forgave him. You did not know that?" I was not compelled to add to her humiliation by telling her that I did know it, therefore I held my peace. "But every one else knew it," she went on, her chest heaving, and her voice rising to a cry almost; "I would not break down then; and all these months I know Uncle James and Aunt Emily have been blaming themselves for giving way to my wishes; and now it will kill me." The clock struck one. "For mercy's sake go down again," she exclaimed, starting up. "Keep every one from me;—keep away yourself, till you can tell me he is come. I shall go mad if I am not left alone."

Once more I went away on my hopeless mission. Some people whom I knew stopped me before I reached the door of the room in which the Hazelwoods were still alone. "Miss Archer," the lady said, "we feel that really, under the circumstances, it will be better for us to order our carriages and go away quietly."

"Already?" I asked bitterly.

She shrugged her shoulders. "We really think so;" she replied; "of course we hope for the best; but really, the position is so very painful;—the Hazelwoods are very much to be pitied, and so is poor Miss Verney;—but some people have foreseen this."

"I will say good morning to you at once," I said coldly. Then I went in to take further counsel with poor Mrs. Hazelwood, who by this time was weeping almost as bitterly as the insulted bride-elect. We formed a thousand plans, abandoned them, and formed others. We hoped, we suggested, we excused. All in vain. The hours crept on. Twice I had been up to Isabel's door, which was locked, and had been refused admittance by her.

"You shall leave me alone," she said the last time I knocked. "I dare not see any one yet, Helen; you don't know what this is; it's worse than death."

At three o'clock the house was deserted by all but the regular

inhabitants. For the last hour we had obeyed Isabel's injunction, and had left her "alone" to battle with that agony which she had declared to be worse than death. During that hour I had remained with Mr. and Mrs. Hazelwood, for all reserve on the subject was banished now, and they spoke freely before me and to me of the insulting wrong that had been offered to their child. They blamed themselves in words that went to my heart, for that touch of weakness in their love for her which had induced them to consent to the renewal of the engagement which had once been broken. Blamed themselves, because they would suffer no shadow of their blame to fall on the poor, loving, betrayed, obstinate girl, who was wrestling with her sorrow alone up-stairs.

"It broke her health and altered her temper the first time," poor Mrs. Hazelwood said at last.

"By Heaven's help it shall not break her heart now," her husband answered; "all that love and care and change of scene can do, shall be done."

"Ah! my dear, such love and care as this, faithful as it is, will never heal this wound, or fill this gap," the old lady said to him tenderly; "the more we cherish and prize her, the more she will feel that she has been slighted and scorned and slapped by the hand she prized and cherished most!"

"I must insist on my child seeing me and speaking to me now," Mr. Hazelwood said in answer to this, rising up slowly as he spoke. "Come, Emily, let us go to her; alone, Miss Archer; not even you must see this meeting." He put his hand kindly on my shoulder, as he led his wife past me, and I stood back reverentially almost, for theirs was a great sorrow.

A hush had fallen over the house, and through the silence that reigned I heard him knock at Isabel's door. Then he leant over the banisters and called impatiently, "Send a locksmith here; she can't open the door:" and then I forgot his request that I should remain below, and ran up to join them. "She cannot open the door," Mrs. Hazelwood said, getting hold of my hand and looking at me with frightened eyes, and I asked in a whisper,—

"Did she tell you so?"

"No!—yes, she said something. Ah!" this was a sigh of mingled terror and relief, as the door gave way and we got into the room.

Isabel was standing by a table in the window that commanded the avenue, leaning against the table, evidently requiring its support. She moved her head slowly and with an effort as we approached her, and her lips moved, but I did not hear any words. The fair beauty of her face was gone, altogether gone. Not marred and disfigured by passion, but gone as utterly as if she had never been any other than the haggard woman we now looked upon. Of the misery, the pain,

the hopelessness there was in her eyes as she turned them upon us, I can give no adequate idea.

We did not speak to her. We were wise in that. We did not torture her with words then. Her uncle took her in his arms, and moved her from the window, and as he did so, she threw back one wild despairing glance along the avenue by which he had promised to come. "She is cold as death!" Mr. Hazelwood said, as he placed her on the sofa; and as he placed her she remained, making no movement to attain ease or rest, but just staying in the crumpled-up position which her helplessness had obliged him to place her in.

We took off her wreath and veil very gently, and the hours went by, and we thought she was resting and praying, for her eyes were closed and her hands were clasped. But just as the sun was sinking she rose up with a suddenness that startled away the possibility of our attempting to stop her, and went over to the window once more. Then she turned away nearly blind and staggering, and when we caught her in our arms we knew that the tension had been too great, and that now it was nearly over.

So she died, just as the day did, the day to which she had looked forward with such wearing fluctuations of feeling for a year. I can give no record of the time that followed. She was dead! Suddenly that fair beautiful thing that was lying on the couch was taken from us, and colder hands moved it about, and colder lips named it, and we were nothing. We were only "permitted" by the old nurse to remain in the room.

Rumours came to us before we could go away from the place which had been the scene of that terrible life and death struggle, that the man on whose head her blood rests, had gone away from Clannere the night before that fatal day. Strangers rent his place now, and he has never been heard of since Isabel died for him. It is still a heart-sickening mystery, whether his conduct was caused by wanton cruelty, by the consequences of some former crime committed by him, or by madness. It is hard to believe that insanity could have so deliberately planned such treachery.

WHAT IS THE EASTERN QUESTION ?

WHEN commenting some time ago upon the relations between this country and the great European Powers,* we purposely omitted to touch upon the position of Russia. Not because we were inclined to question her influence over the affairs of Europe and of the world, but because, in discussing the connection which she may have with the policy and position of England, we must necessarily have entered upon an inquiry into the Eastern question. The subject is one of such vast importance to us that it requires a separate notice.

As regards Russia, we may observe, before going further, that her relations to the rest of Europe have not been less affected by the events of the last few years than those of other states. Her position, both external and internal, is no longer such as it was before the Crimean and Danish wars. She no longer exercises that mischievous and unwholesome power over Prussia and the small German States which paralysed their independence and destroyed the influence of the German race in the affairs of Europe for more than half a century. Such a state of things would be incompatible with a united Germany, with free German institutions, and with a Prussian policy no longer guided by family alliances and personal sympathies. On the other hand, a great national movement is unquestionably taking place in Russia; while intercourse with the rest of the world, and the influence of new ideas arising out of modern civilisation, which even Russian despotism cannot prevent, are gradually leading to the diffusion of liberal opinions, and of views with regard to the rights of peoples and the duties of governments, which must produce, sooner or later, vast changes in the political condition of Russia herself.

Unhappily, the last Polish revolution, whilst retarding for very many years, if not destroying for ever, the realisation of the hopes of the Poles, has, at the same time, checked the spread of free thought and the development of liberal institutions in Russia. Up to the time of the outbreak, Russia and Poland were aiding each other in obtaining representative government. The moderate and thinking men who are the leaders of the liberal and constitutional party in Russia were watching with the keenest interest and anxiety the progress of events in Poland, and were viewing with the utmost satisfaction the gradual though very limited introduction of free institutions into that country

* See "The New Saint Pauls" for December, 1867: "England's Place in Europe."

under the pressure brought to bear upon the Russian Government, and the genuine, though feeble, conscientious scruples of the Emperor at the violation of treaties. They felt that when the cause of freedom had made a certain advance in one part of the empire, it could not be kept back in the other; and that every step forward in Poland was so much gained for Russia. Consequently, their sympathies went entirely with the Marquis Wielopolski and his followers in their endeavours to obtain for Poland a certain degree of self-government and national administration, such as she was entitled to under treaty. They were not only ready to help this party in its policy, but had indirectly given it very material assistance. Indeed, a very important section of public opinion in Russia,—important because, although perhaps small in numbers, it comprised men of influence and education, and of wise and patriotic views,—was entirely favourable to the modified autonomy which the Russian Government seemed at one time prepared to concede to Poland. But whilst there was this coincidence of policy between the moderate and what may be called constitutional parties in Russia and Poland, there was a similar understanding between the extreme or red parties in both countries. Unfortunately, not only for Poland; but for the cause of liberty and progress in Russia herself, the Polish extreme party raised the standard of revolution at a most inopportune and premature moment. They could depend upon the Catholic clergy; but they had neither the sympathy nor support of the Polish aristocracy and constitutional party,—comprising the most influential and trustworthy men in Poland. They may have received encouragement by promises of foreign aid from one or two Poles of rank and distinction, leaders in the previous revolution; but these were men who had lived in exile since that event, and who, as is usual with exiles, were little acquainted with the altered condition of their own country, and misunderstood the feelings and policy of the country in which they lived. The reds and revolutionary clubs in Europe abetted the insurrection, but could give it no useful assistance. France was not in a position to come to the aid of the Poles, and only further misled them by an energetic expression of the sympathy which she has always felt for that unfortunate people. England could do no more than remind the Russian Government of its obligations, and make such remonstrances as she was entitled to make by treaty. The insurrection consequently only ended in bloodshed and disaster, and has been a final blow to the independence, prosperity, and happiness of Poland. Never has revolution been put down with a more cruel and unsparing hand. Every right has been violated,—injustice in every form committed. Russia has determined to “stamp out” Polish nationality and every vestige of Polish independence. Religion and language are, if possible, to be destroyed to effect these objects; and Russia is deliberately, and in the face of Europe and civilisation, pursuing a policy in unhappy Poland which the most barbarous Tartar

racés that have emerged from the wilds of Asia would have shrunk from pursuing towards a conquered people.

But perhaps the most lamentable result of this premature movement was that it strengthened the retrograde party in Russia, and compelled those who had been friendly to the cause of progress in Poland to unite with her enemies in crushing her liberties. They dared not appear in the face of the great majority of their countrymen as approvers of a Polish insurrection against the supremacy of Russia, even if their sympathies would have carried them so far. The encouragement which they had previously given to the Poles laid them open to suspicion, and, as is not uncommon in such cases, they may have shown more ardour than they really felt in helping to extinguish the last vestiges of Polish independence.

Had Poland bided her time, and had the constitutional party, which had already obtained unlooked-for success in their negotiations with the Russian Government, been allowed to gain strength and to profit by the concessions in favour of Polish nationality which they had exacted from Russia, the day was not perhaps far distant when she might have been in a position to assert her right to a purely national administration, and to a separate government under the crown of Russia, in the same way as Hungary has succeeded in doing with regard to Austria. Perhaps, indeed, she might ultimately have achieved complete independence. She would have been aided by the force of treaties, by the moral support of Europe, by the sympathy and common interests of a powerful party in Russia, and by the united exertions of her best and wisest citizens. Her true policy would have been to wait until the moment had arrived for that great popular movement which was approaching in Russia. She might then have taken advantage of the occasion to gain her own liberties. By this ill-timed insurrection she has not only struck a fatal blow at her own independence, but she has thrown back the cause of liberty in Russia herself.

But it is chiefly with the relations of Russia to the Turkish empire that we have to deal, and these relations are the principal ingredients in "the Eastern question." What is "the Eastern question?" Although these three words have been in the mouth of every politician in Europe for many years past, it would perhaps be difficult to define their precise meaning. They would seem to signify that the European Powers have an imperative duty thrown upon them to change or readjust the territorial condition of the Ottoman empire, and the relations of the Sultan towards his Christian subjects. But why, it may be asked, is any such change or readjustment necessary? Turkey is constituted like any other state. She has an ancient and well-established government, well-defined limits, a powerful army and navy, and a civil administration, and she has treaties with the European Powers, by which she is placed on the same footing as regards international law as other nations. She is not an encroaching nor a

missionary Power, and she has no desire to meddle in any way with other countries. All she asks is to be allowed to manage her own affairs in conformity with that principle of non-intervention which England and other Powers now so ostentatiously put forward as the very foundation of the political relations between states, and of the improved foreign policy of civilised nations. But it is charged against Turkey that she is badly governed ; that she is a Mohammedan state, and has consequently no business in Europe ; that the creed professed by her governing class, who are in the minority, differs from that of the majority, and is an intolerant creed ; that she does not grant perfect civil and religious liberty and equality to all persons, without distinction of religion or race ; that her administration and her officials are corrupt ; that her laws are bad, and not the same for all ; that amongst her varied populations some have been and are in revolt against her authority ; that in some parts of the empire brigandage prevails, and life is not safe ; that many rich and fertile districts are waste ; and that her vast resources are not properly developed. Is such the condition of Turkey alone amongst the countries of Europe ? Is there no bad government, no intolerance, no inequality before the law between persons of different faith, no fair provinces uncultivated, no discontent, and no revolt in Spain ? Are Protestants and Catholics, Jews and Mohammedans, treated precisely the same in all other states ? Is there no corruption amongst officials and in the government, no sale of justice, no intolerance to those who do not belong to the dominant faith, no oppression and cruelty, no chronic disaffection and revolt in the Russian empire ? Have we no discontent in any part of the British dominions, no injustice towards those who differ from us in religion and race ? Do our Catholic fellow-subjects admit that they are, or are they believed in Europe to be, absolutely on the same footing as Protestants ? No one would venture to answer these questions in the affirmative. And yet we never hear of a Spanish question, nor of a Russian question, nor of an English question, that requires to be settled by the arms or diplomacy of Europe.

The truth is that all these accusations against Turkey, whether well founded or not, have really nothing whatever to do with "the Eastern question," and are merely put forward as pretences offering a decent cloak to a policy which the European Powers are pursuing towards her, and which they would not venture to pursue towards any other Power. "The Eastern question," in fact, means something very different in different countries. In France it means the establishment in the Levant of a predominant French influence, for no particular purpose of territorial aggrandisement or increase of commerce, but merely to gratify national vanity, and to enable the Government to secure the support of the Roman Catholic clergy. In Russia it means the weakening and gradual dismemberment of the Turkish

empire, in order to prepare the way for the complete predominance of her own influence amongst its Christian populations, and ultimately for the acquisition of Constantinople and of the richest provinces of Turkey in Europe. In Austria it means a presentiment that she is losing the influence she once had over the Slavonian populations of Western Turkey; that she dreads the progress of Russian intrigues amongst them, and anticipates, unless she can check those intrigues, the absorption into the Russian empire of her own Slavonian states; that she foresees the time when the mouths of the Danube may be closed against her; and that, in order to prevent these evils, she must maintain the integrity of the Turkish empire, but is afraid to pursue a straightforward and honest policy with regard to it. With Greece and her friends it means the expulsion of the Turks from Europe, and the handing over of their lands and goods to Greeks. With England it means a vague uncomfortable feeling that if Russia gets possession of Constantinople and the European provinces of Turkey, the whole of the Asiatic possessions of the Sultan must sooner or later fall into her clutches, and that not only would such a vast increase to her territory and such a commanding position give her a dangerous supremacy in Europe, but that they would destroy our power and influence in the East, and that we should be unable to hold our Indian empire. As regards Prussia and Italy, neither of them seems to have yet made up her mind what her interests in the East may be, and "the Eastern question" with both of them has hitherto resolved itself into the consideration of what policy would best serve immediate national objects. Consequently, Prussia has at one time supported Russia, and at another has leant towards France or Austria, whilst Italy has hitherto found it to her advantage to go with France in her Eastern policy.

In a few words, "the Eastern question" means this:—How can any one European Power best serve its interests or gratify its ambition at the expense of Turkey?

Now it happens that Turkey is the only European state which can be assailed with impunity, and which any two or more Powers may declare their intention of dismembering in violation of treaties, right, and justice, and yet have a large mass of public opinion in their favour. If any opposition is offered to their schemes, it is not on the ground of morality, or of the outrage which such arbitrary proceedings may inflict on international law and the rights of nations, but on the ground of policy and interest. This appears to arise from the assumption that, although a large proportion of the inhabitants of Turkey in Europe is Mohammedan, the majority is of a different religion. Providence, it is surmised, by permitting above five millions of souls to be born in a faith which is not that of the rest of Europe, has manifestly intended that they should be the spoil of the Christian. What is just, right, and reasonable with regard to believers in the Gospel is the reverse when applied to the followers of the Koran.

To deprive a professing Christian,—it signifies little what may be the form of his faith, or how far he may follow its precepts,—of his liberty, his land, or his life, is a crime; but to expel a Mohammedan,—however good and honest he may be,—from his house and fields, and to drive him to starve in the wilderness, which is his proper home, is a meritorious act. To aid and abet the revolted subjects of a Christian state is a violation of international duties; to encourage and assist the Christian subjects of a Mohammedan state in spreading misery, desolation, and bloodshed amongst innocent people of a different religion, and to throw every impediment in the way of the unbelieving Government in its endeavours to suppress the insurrection and to protect the lives and property of those who are of its own faith, is a policy proper to be pursued by a Christian and civilised Power.

Such is the public opinion of Europe with regard to Turkey, when we divest it of the hypocritical mask of humanity, liberty, and religion. This bare statement would appear exaggerated and untrue if it were not for the language used in the British Parliament and press by persons professing to hold extreme liberal opinions, and for the policy which has been openly pursued by Russia, France, and other Powers towards Turkey. Some of the leaders of liberal opinion in this country have, unfortunately, been foremost in urging,—without, we believe, understanding precisely what they meant,—that “the Turk should be expelled from Europe;” that is to say, that above five millions of human beings, who happen not to be Christians, should, on account of this difference of religion, be deprived of all they possess in virtue of the most sacred of rights, and be driven like so much cattle across the Bosphorus into Asia. If it were not for the wickedness and cruelty of such a doctrine, and for the vast amount of human misery and suffering that it has already produced, its absurdity would only provoke laughter.

Some will perhaps say that it is not on account of any difference of religion between Turk and Christian that they hold these opinions, but because the Turks are intruders in Europe, and have no right to the soil except that of conquest, and are ignorant, incapable of civilisation, and, from religion and race, incurable oppressors of Christians. We shall have no difficulty in demonstrating that these bold assertions are entirely at variance with facts, and show a strange want of knowledge and confusion of ideas with regard to the origin, condition, and relations of the various populations of the Turkish empire.

These erroneous views have partly arisen from the habit most persons have of confounding, when discussing the subject of Turkey, the Turkish people with the Turkish Government. Those who, like Lord Palmerston, have advocated a policy of justice and humanity towards the Mohammedan population of Turkey, have been accused of support-

ing the misgovernment and misdeeds of Turkish ministers and pashas. Those who desire to be strictly just and impartial, and to see the rights of Mussulmans respected as well as those of Christians, are stigmatised as "Philo-Turks." Through ignorance or design, the fact has been kept out of view that there are in Turkey in Europe probably five or six millions, perhaps even more, of Mohammedans, or Turks, as we are in the habit of calling them,—comprising landholders, peasant cultivators and proprietors of the soil, traders, and shopkeepers,—who suffer from the same misgovernment and are subject to the same oppression, where such exist, as their Christian fellow-subjects. Not only is such the case, but it will be found, on reference to the reports of Her Majesty's consuls in the East presented to Parliament, that if there be any difference between them it is in favour of the Christians, who are exempted from some of the burdens which weigh so heavily upon Mohammedans,—especially from military conscription. Moreover, the Christians have the means of bringing their grievances before the Government and before Europe, and of obtaining redress through the agency of the representatives of foreign Powers who claim the right of affording them protection and support. If, therefore, our sympathy is to be shown, and we are to interfere in behalf of those who are believed to be suffering from tyranny and misgovernment, and our policy towards Turkey is to be founded on no other principle, we should extend that sympathy and interference to the Mohammedans as well as to the Christians. But unfortunately in the debates in Parliament, and in the writings of those who take the Greek view of the Eastern question, we never find any allusion to the Mussulman populations. They are all included in the one sweeping denunciation against the Turkish rule,—“They must be driven out of Europe.”

In order to come to a sound conclusion on the subject of the policy to be pursued towards Turkey, it is necessary to have some knowledge of the condition of its European provinces, especially as regards the relative numbers of their inhabitants of different races and creeds. Unfortunately it is very difficult, if not impossible, to obtain accurate and reliable statistics with regard to the population of Turkey in Europe. Those who have written upon the subject have generally been biassed by political considerations, and have exaggerated the number of the Christians, whilst diminishing that of the Mohammedans. The former are usually estimated at nearly ten millions, the latter at about four millions; and the large majority of the Christians is used as a conclusive argument for the expulsion of the Mussulman from Europe. But, in the first place, it must be borne in mind that the inhabitants of the United Danubian Principalities, or Roumania, and of Servia and Montenegro, are included in this estimate of the Christian population. Those semi-independent states are exclusively Christian, and contain no mixture of Mohammedans. From Servia the few

Turks who once lived there have been expelled; in Wallachia, Moldavia, and Montenegro they never dwelt. Consequently, in founding any arguments upon the relative numbers of the mixed populations of Turkey in Europe, we must confine ourselves to the provinces of Bosnia, Herzegovina, Albania, Bulgaria, and Roumelia,—including the ancient states of Macedonia and Thrace. Deducting, therefore, the population of Roumania, which amounts to four millions, and that of Servia, which may be reckoned at one million, there remain rather less than five millions of Christians in Turkey in Europe. The numbers of the Mohammedans are very differently stated. We have seen them placed as low as three millions. According to an estimate in the last edition of the "*Encyclopædia Britannica*," stated to be given on good authority, they amount to 5,900,000. A Turkish official of high authority, who was for many years at the head of the recruiting and conscription department of the Ministry of War, and has been governor of the principal provinces of Turkey in Europe, has even reckoned them at nearly ten millions, exclusive of the inhabitants of Constantinople. This estimate so far exceeds that of any European writer that we might be inclined to set it aside at once, were it not for the source from which it comes. One fact, however, appears to us undoubtedly clear, notwithstanding the assertion so generally and confidently made to the contrary,—that so far from the Christian population of what may strictly be called Turkey in Europe being greatly in excess of the Mohammedan, if there be any difference between them, it is in favour of the Mussulmans or Turks.

The two religions are mixed in the large towns,—not so, generally, in the villages. The Mohammedan population may be divided into two distinct classes,—the Ottomans, or the descendants of the Turkish conquerors who dispossessed the original proprietors of the soil, and the descendants of the ancient Christian landholders, who changed their faith to retain their lands. The first differ in race and language from the Christians; the others are of precisely the same origin, speak the same tongue, and have customs, sentiments, and traditions in common with them.

The Christians of Turkey in Europe are mainly Slavonians, Albanians, and Greeks. Some villages are inhabited by a race speaking the Roumanian language, and in Constantinople and the principal cities are numerous families of Armenians, chiefly engaged in commerce.*

The Slavonian Christians, for the most part, profess the tenets of the Greek Church. Hence the confusion which exists in the minds of so many persons with regard to the Greek population of Turkey,

* According to the statistics of population in the last edition of the "*Encyc. Brit.*," there are in Turkey in Europe 5,900,000 Mussulmans, 9,480,000 Christians of the Greek Church, including Servians and Roumanians,

which is supposed to include all those who are of the Greek religion.* The Christians of Albania are mostly of the Roman Catholic faith, except the population of the southern districts, or Epirus. The people speaking the Greek language and professing the Greek faith, and who are consequently the only part of the population of Turkey in Europe which has any claim to be called "Greek," inhabit Thessaly and some of the mountain districts and plains in Epirus, and are found in Constantinople and the principal cities and towns on the sea-coast of Macedonia and Thrace. In numbers they are greatly inferior to the Slavonians; and, according to the best authorities, do not much exceed a million.

Amongst the many erroneous ideas which prevail concerning the Christian subjects of the Porte is the one that they are not landholders and cannot possess land. So far from this being the case, much of the land in Turkey is held by Christians, and the number of Christian landholders is daily increasing. The Turkish law with regard to land is the same as that of England. Aliens cannot possess it, whilst subjects of the Sultan, whatever may be their religion or race, may do so. But the Turkish law is more easily evaded than that of England, and there are numerous fictions of which foreigners have largely availed themselves to possess land.†

Such being the relative proportions of the different populations in Turkey in Europe, let us consider for a moment "the settlement of the Eastern question" which is advocated by certain politicians, viz., that the Mohammedans should be expelled from Europe, and that the Greeks should replace them. This is what is called "the grand idea" in Greece, and is the profession of political faith which is required of every Greek who wishes to obtain favour with his countrymen, and of those who sympathise with the Greeks. It would

and 450,000 Roman Catholics. The whole population is divided, but upon no good authority, into—

Ottomans	3,000,000
Greeks	1,600,000
Slavonians	4,000,000
Albanians	1,600,000
Wallachians	600,000
Armenians	300,000
Jews	250,000
Franks	50,000
Gipsies	200,000

* The Bulgarians would appear to have been originally a Turkish or Tartar tribe, who have in the course of time adopted the Greek religion and the Slavonian language, and have consequently been included in the Slavonian race.

† So long as the capitulations are in force which place foreigners in Turkey under the exclusive jurisdiction of the representatives of their own country, and enable them to evade the payment of taxes and obedience to the laws, it is not surprising that the Turkish Government should be disinclined to change the law so as to enable aliens to hold land.

perhaps be difficult to define how this is to be accomplished, or what are the precise views of Greek statesmen on the subject. But the general notion seems to be that the Cross instead of the Crescent is to surmount the dome of St. Sophia; that instead of the Sultan and his ministers and the Turkish governing class, the King of Greece, Greek statesmen, and Athenian place-hunters should be installed at Constantinople, and that those who profess the Mohammedan religion should no longer be allowed to hold land, or even to live in Turkey, but should be driven at once across the Bosphorus into Asia Minor, which is supposed to be their natural home. Whether the lands thus forfeited are to be distributed amongst the Greeks who are to migrate from Greece with their king and statesmen, or amongst some other people professing the Greek religion, which, it is presumed, constitutes a sufficient title to land in what is now the Turkish empire, does not very clearly appear. This sweeping policy of revolution and confiscation, which seems to be perfectly easy and natural to the Greeks, has been so constantly put forward as the course of action which it is the positive duty of Christendom to support, that it is accepted by a vast number of persons in this country and elsewhere as absolutely necessary, and as sooner or later inevitable. If any argument were allowed on the subject, putting aside all considerations of morality, justice, and right, it might perhaps be well to inquire whether the Greeks have shown themselves deserving of so great a charge as that of the government of an empire,—whether the small kingdom of Greece, including the territories which have been annexed to it since its foundation, have been so administered as to induce any one to place confidence in the integrity and morality of the Greeks, in their power of governing others, and in their capacity for the enjoyment of free institutions,—whether Greek statesmen have displayed that honesty, patriotism, and self-sacrifice which should encourage Europe to place in their hands the destinies, happiness, and welfare of some millions of men. The very best friends of Greece, the most ardent advocates of the “grand idea,” would scarcely venture to answer these questions in the affirmative. The papers laid before the British Parliament on the condition of the Ionian Islands since their annexation to Greece will show the fate which awaits those who may be placed under Greek administration. The state of Greece is a disgrace to any government calling itself civilised. The lamentable want of honesty in Greek public men, the conduct of Greek ministers, the low standard of public morality, seem to render any improvement hopeless. These things are not denied by the advocates and friends of Greece, but an attempt is made to justify or excuse them on two grounds: first, the long subjection of Greece to the demoralising tyranny of Turkish rule; and, secondly, the circumscribed limits of the kingdom,

which prevent the development of its resources, and condemn it to poverty and want.

Those who attribute the corruption and demoralisation of the Greek race to Turkish rule seem to forget, or to purposely overlook, the condition of the Byzantine empire and of its varied populations at the time of the Ottoman conquest. Let them refresh their memories by reference to the pages of Gibbon, or to any history of the Lower Empire. Utter and unexampled corruption in the ruling classes; immorality and vice, amounting to actual barbarism, in the populations; general insecurity and disorder; foreign conquerors, sometimes consisting of a mere handful of men, establishing themselves in the capital; the Mohammedans more than once at the gates and in the suburbs of Constantinople before its final conquest; the very name of Greek a term of reproach in Europe; such was the state in which the Byzantine empire was found by the Turkish conquerors, to whom it fell an easy prey. If either race was corrupted or debased by the other, it may be with some truth asserted that it was rather the hardy and warlike Ottomans than the Greeks of Constantinople.

There is no better foundation for the other alleged reason for the present condition of Greece. It is asserted that if Thessaly, Epirus, and the island of Crete had been included in the kingdom, when originally constituted, its resources, productions, and commerce would have been so much increased, and its people would have been so prosperous, that Greece would have had no debts, which stimulate public immorality and corruption, and no want, which leads to brigandage and misrule. But are there any grounds for these assumptions? In Thessaly there are one or two fine plains yielding rich crops, but the remainder of the province is mountainous, and not capable of much cultivation. In Epirus the arable land is probably even less in extent than in Thessaly. The two provinces together would scarcely have given more than five or six hundred thousand inhabitants to the kingdom. Crete is, no doubt, in many parts, rich and fertile; but that island alone could have added little to the prosperity of Greece, and its mixed population would probably have been the cause of much embarrassment. More than a third of its inhabitants, comprising an industrious and peaceful race, differing only in religion from the Christians, would have been dispossessed of their lands; but the injustice and impolicy of such a confiscation are not to be taken into consideration.

It is not very evident how the annexation to Greece of the populations of Thessaly, Epirus, and Crete would have changed the character of Greek statesmen, improved the administration of her affairs, or prevented brigandage. With even these additions, Greece could never become a producing and exporting country. Nature has herself pointed out the part which the inhabitants of Greece are called upon to play. In many respects they are

a highly-gifted people,—intelligent, frugal, active, persevering, full of resources, with a special turn for commerce and maritime adventure, and keenly alive to the importance of education as the means of advancement and success in life. On the other hand, they are deficient in those high qualities which are the chief elements in the greatness of a nation;—in honesty, truthfulness, real patriotism, and capacity for self-sacrifice. The cause of the failure of constitutional government in Greece is the absence of a moral standard and of any controlling public opinion. Statesmanship has been the mere scramble for power for the sake of its gains. Country and reputation,—everything which good and honest men are accustomed to look upon as most sacred,—have been readily sacrificed for the sake of the miserable pittance which a few months of office afford. The most sordid motives and reckless dishonesty are cloaked under the garb of high-sounding protestations of patriotism and public virtue. The most vehement denunciations of Turkish oppression and misrule have been made by men calling themselves statesmen, who have been at the very time supporting relations and friends amongst the brigands, or oppressing and maltreating the unfortunate inhabitants of the Ionian Islands. That Greece might have developed her resources, and have become prosperous and wealthy, by making proper use of the gifts which nature has bestowed upon her, the example of such places as the small and flourishing island of Syra is sufficient to prove.

What right then, let us ask, have the Greeks to Constantinople and to the provinces of Turkey in Europe? Even admitting that the statesmen of Greece had shown honesty and capacity, and that the kingdom of Greece had been a model of good government, upon what principle should we be justified in assisting to place under Greek rule some ten or twelve millions of people differing in race, language, and sentiments, and a considerable part in religion, from the Greeks,—hostile to them, and preferring their present condition to annexation to Greece? But if the antagonism of race did not exist, the condition of Greece since her independence would be a sufficient warning to the Bulgarian and other Christian populations of Turkey in Europe to deter them from wishing to place themselves under Greek rule. Whilst European statesmen and philanthropists have encouraged the Greeks in their ambitious schemes for the acquisition of the Turkish provinces, no movement has been made by the Christians of Turkey themselves in favour of annexation to Greece, nor have they shown any inclination to unite with Greece in her hostile manœuvres against Turkey. The Bulgarians, Bosnians, and Albanians have refused to take any part with the Greeks in their attempts to raise insurrections against the Turkish Government. It may appear curious that even the Greeks of Thessaly and Epirus have declined to listen to Greek agents, and have preferred to remain under their Turkish rulers. The attempts constantly made during the last few years, openly and undisguisedly,

by the agents of the Greek Government, to induce these populations to rise have signally failed. So much so that, in order to induce Europe to believe that there were outbreaks and discontent in those provinces, the Greek Government has had recourse to the plan of sending organised bands of brigands and marauders across the frontier to disturb public security, and to compel the Turks to send troops to defend their territory. The fact of this want of sympathy of the Greeks of Turkey for their co-religionists may be accounted for by the proceedings of the Greek liberators when they generously undertook to free a Christian people from the Turkish yoke. There has been more than one invasion of Thessaly and Epirus by the Greeks; and the Christians of those provinces, who have seen their villages burned, their crops destroyed, their property plundered, and their wives and children slaughtered by their deliverers, have no wish for their return. It is not, perhaps, surprising that they should be so insensible to the attractions of "the grand idea," and to the advantages of union with Greece, as to seek the protection of the Mohammedan authorities against their fellow Christians.

There is no doubt that had Greece been well governed, and that had her statesmen shown a wise, tolerant, and patriotic spirit, and devoted themselves to the development of her resources and to the establishment of her credit instead of following the cravings of a vain and reprehensible ambition, the Christians of Turkey might have regarded her in a very different light. If Greece had shown the example of a free and prosperous constitutional kingdom, she might at least have furnished an element in "the solution of the Eastern question."

As, however, little can be hoped from Greece, it may be worth while to inquire whether, amongst the Christian populations of Turkey in Europe, there may be one which might form the nucleus of a state to replace the Turkish dominion. Serbia and Roumania have been put forward as fulfilling the necessary conditions, and the claims of each have their supporters.

The Servians; it is well known, are a Slavonian people professing the Greek faith. The population of Serbia amounts to about one million, and is almost exclusively agricultural. The head of the Government is an elected prince, who is dependent upon the Porte. He is nominally under the control of a kind of popular assembly, and Serbia might claim to be called, if she were entirely independent of the Porte, a constitutional monarchy. But in effect the prince is despotic, and has shown that he is above law and popular control. The Servians are a quiet, inoffensive, ignorant race, fairly industrious, and more intent upon the breeding of their pigs and the cultivation of their small farms than upon political agitation. They do not feel any particular hatred to the Turks, but are bigoted and intolerant, like most other Christians of the East. The policy of the country is

directed by a few intriguing and unscrupulous men who have received a varnish of Parisian education, whose standard of political morality is as low as that of the public men in Greece, and who have succeeded in deceiving their own countrymen, and inducing Europe to believe that their cause is that of national freedom and of Christian resistance to Mussulman tyranny. They have received support and encouragement from those whose interests and policy are hostile to Turkey, and, indeed, to Servia herself, and from some public men in England and elsewhere, who have been deluded into the belief that they are promoting a national movement, and helping the oppressed to throw off the yoke of the oppressor. The result has been that Servia has become a focus of intrigue against Turkey, and the base from which Turkish territory may at any time be invaded with impunity. Unfortunately, the European Powers have pursued towards her the same policy that they have pursued towards Greece. In violation of every principle of justice and of international law, they have abetted Servia in her open aggression upon Turkey, and have prevented the Turkish Government from adopting the most necessary measures for self-defence, and for the protection of her own territory and subjects. Whenever Turks have been slaughtered by Servians, the incident has been hailed as a just sacrifice to outraged Christianity. Whenever a Servian brigand has been killed by a Mohammedan, even in self-defence, he has been proclaimed a martyr, whose death it is the duty of Christian Europe to avenge. Bands of armed men have been collected on the Servian frontier, and launched upon the innocent Turkish populations, Christian as well as Mohammedan, to spread fire and the sword in the name of Slavonian nationality. The ancient Mussulman possessors of the soil have been expelled from Servia and deprived of their lands because they were Mohammedans. Compensation promised to them by solemn agreement has never been paid, because in dealing with unbelievers no engagement is binding upon Christians. The Turks were compelled, by the pressure brought to bear upon them by the European Powers, to give up the fortress of Belgrade and other strong places, which they held of right and by virtue of treaties, upon the solemn promise and condition that this concession would remove the only grievance which existed on the part of Servia against the Suzerain Power, and that the Servian Government would henceforth abstain from a policy hostile to Turkey, and would no longer incite to insurrection her Christian subjects. No sooner had the cession been made than the Servian Government took advantage of the weakened state of Turkey to push forward with renewed activity its intrigues in the neighbouring Turkish provinces, and to prepare for their actual invasion.

Whilst the fortress of Belgrade was in the hands of Turkey, she had still some defence against aggression,—especially from Russia. With the surrender of that fortress, the influence of Russia in Servia

became supreme, and Servia may herself have opened the way to the ultimate destruction of her own national independence.

The European Powers, with the exception of Russia, who has ever encouraged Servia in her hostile conduct towards Turkey, have recently perceived the danger of the policy they have pursued in Servia, and have endeavoured to counteract its mischievous results by addressing the most urgent remonstrances to the prince, and by calling upon him to discontinue his armaments against Turkey, and his unscrupulous intrigues amongst her Slavonian populations. But these diplomatic lectures are of little avail when Servia is backed and supported by Russia. It costs nothing to men insensible to truth and to moral considerations to make promises which they do not intend to keep, and to put forward statements which are at once disproved. We have taken away from the Porte the power of coercing and restraining the Servians, and we have thrown open the province to a Russian occupation in case of war between Russia and Turkey, or between Russia and Austria.

Servia has probably suffered as much, or even more than Turkey, by the policy which she has pursued, and in which she has obtained the support of Europe. Whilst under the suzerainty and protection of Turkey, and enjoying at the same time, under the guarantee of the European Powers, the most complete national independence and self-government, she could develop her resources, improve the condition of her people, and firmly establish liberal representative institutions. She required no army nor any expensive machinery of government, and the Servians might have been as lightly taxed, and as happy, free, and prosperous, as any people in the world. But, like Greece, she has committed the fatal mistake of sacrificing these solid advantages and her true interests to an inordinate and foolish ambition, and to visionary schemes of a grand Slavonian nationality. The result has been that with increasing expenditure and debt, incurred by placing the greater part of the male population under arms, with heavy taxation and military burdens which have spread discontent and disaffection at home, and with the awakened jealousy of Russia and Austria, Servia has so weakened her position that her chances of becoming the centre of a great Slavonian state, if she ever had any, are now probably gone. There is no sympathy for her amongst the Christians of Bulgaria, who have no wish to be placed under Servian rule. The Christians of Bosnia might be disposed to respond to an appeal to rise against the Turkish authorities, but they could do little in a struggle against the Mohammedan population ; and the wild tribes of Montenegro have already been too much weakened by fruitless and disastrous wars with the Turks to afford Servia much assistance in her designs upon Turkey. On the other hand, Russia is ready to use Servia for her own purposes, but with no intention whatever of helping her to form a strong and independent Slavonian state on the

Danube, which would be altogether contrary to her designs and policy. Whilst resolved upon weakening, and ultimately destroying, the Turkish rule in Europe, she has no wish to substitute for it a powerful Slavonian kingdom.

On the other hand, Austria appears at length to be alive to the dangerous results to herself which arise from the policy she has pursued with regard to Servia and the Porte. She now perceives that Servia will be made use of by Russia,—indeed, has already been made use of,—to carry on ambitious designs and intrigues amongst the Slavonian populations of the Austrian empire as well as amongst those of Turkey. Austria will change her policy, as usual, when it is too late.

If the condition and prospects of Servia are such as we have described them to be, it is not very probable that she can eventually become the nucleus of a great Slavonian state to replace the Turkish dominion in Europe. Is there anything more encouraging in the condition and prospects of the united Danubian provinces or Roumania ?

The political and social state of this country is not in many respects unlike that of Servia. The population is chiefly agricultural, and is inoffensive, ignorant, and lazy. The people in general trouble themselves little about the doctrine of nationalities, of which, indeed, they know nothing ; and would rather be left in the quiet enjoyment of the lands which have of late been placed in the absolute possession of the peasants, than engage in schemes for the foundation of a Roumanian empire, or for the expulsion of the Turks from Europe. Unlike the Servians, however, the Christian inhabitants of Wallachia and Moldavia have never been mixed with a Mohammedan population, and the little they know of the Turks is probably favourable to them, as the Turks have hitherto saved them on more than one occasion from the far more oppressive and distasteful rule of Austrians and Russians. But on the other hand, like all other ignorant races, they are intolerant and bigoted, and would persecute and exterminate those who do not profess the same faith as themselves, as the cruel and inhuman treatment which they have inflicted upon the Jews sufficiently proves.

The policy of Roumania in its relations with Europe and Turkey, like that of Servia, is directed by a few men of ambition, ability, and energy, for the most part brought up out of the country, and under the influence of French opinions. Their standard of public and political morality is as low,—indeed, lower, if possible,—than that of the public men of Greece and Servia. The unscrupulous manner in which they have deceived Europe and violated the most solemn engagements is sufficiently shown by the history of the union, their election of the present prince, and their abortive attempts to raise insurrection in the Turkish provinces.

They have succeeded, like the Servians, in persuading some of the

European Powers and a few public men of influence in England and elsewhere that their cause is that of liberty, of an oppressed nationality, and of popular government. In carrying out their intrigues they have involved their country in debt, increased taxation, sown discontent amongst the Wallachian and Moldavian populations, which has shown itself in open resistance to authority, and have alarmed Austria and Russia. They have done nothing towards the establishment of good government and true freedom. Perhaps in no country in the world is there so much laxity of morals, and such unscrupulous sacrifice of the public weal to personal interests and ambition as in Roumania.

It is asserted by the advocates of Roumanian nationality that there are from ten to twelve millions of souls belonging to the Roumanian race and speaking the Roumanian tongue. Of these, from five to six millions are said to inhabit the united Principalities. The remainder are to be found in the adjoining provinces of Austria and Russia, and scattered over Turkey in Europe. It is the mission of the kingdom of Roumania to unite into one people, and under one rule, these twelve millions of people, who are to be governed from Bucharest.* There are also, we believe, some pretensions put forward to the union of Hungary with Roumania, and we have read something about anticipatory coins struck for the benefit of that country with the effigy of Prince, or King, Charles of Roumania upon them. But we presume that for the time, and until the great Roumanian race is released from bondage and brought under one government, that magnificent scheme will be deferred.

It is difficult to verify the numbers of Roumanians, or Wallachian-speaking people, which, according to Roumanian patriots, are to be found in the East of Europe. We believe them to be much exaggerated. The inhabitants of the united Principalities are generally supposed to amount, as we have stated, to 4,000,000. There are certainly not more, if so many, as 600,000 Wallachians scattered amongst the Slavonians and Albanians of Turkey. Austria is said to contain 2,700,000; and the population of Bessarabia is about 900,000, but is not exclusively Roumanian.

However justified the Roumanians may be in asserting their right to those provinces of Austria and Russia which are inhabited by people speaking the same tongue, we presume that they would scarcely venture to claim the European provinces of Turkey upon the grounds of a common nationality. Such a pretension would be almost too absurd for even a Roumanian politician to put forward. If the claim be based upon the grounds of sympathy between the Roumanian and the Christian populations of Turkey, it may be confidently asserted that no such sympathy exists; but that, on the contrary, the Bulgarians are hostile

* "*Revue de la Roumanie*," Bucharest, Feb. 23rd, 1868. These grand schemes are chiefly advocated in French, as they are intended more for the foreign than for the home market.

to the inhabitants of the Principalities, from whom they differ entirely in race and language. They have, as it is well known, resisted all the attempts made by Roumanian agents, supported by Russia and Servia, to sow disaffection amongst them, and to induce them to rise against the Turkish Government. If the pretence be rested upon the grounds of the manner in which the affairs of the Principalities have been administered, of the contentment and prosperity of their inhabitants, of the toleration and religious equality which are enjoyed by them, and of the success of free institutions and popular government, we fear that in these respects also there is nothing to induce Europe to countenance the pretensions of Roumanian politicians, or to lead either the Christians or the Mohammedans of Turkey to desire to place themselves under Roumanian rule.

One result, very dangerous to the independence, and probably fatal to the future extension, of Roumania, has arisen from the open profession of these wild and ambitious schemes of aggrandisement. They have alarmed Russia and Austria, who are neither of them disposed to surrender important provinces to gratify Roumanian patriots, or to assist their grand designs for a united Roumanian nationality. Consequently Roumania now finds herself between two powerful states, whose interest it is to prevent the establishment of a strong government and the development of liberal institutions within her borders, and who have ample means, through the conduct and want of principle of her public men, to effect that object.

As far as Turkey is concerned, there is no doubt that a compact state upon the Danube, strong enough to maintain itself and completely isolating her from contact with Russia, would be of great advantage to her. But as regards the Principalities themselves, we believe that for their independence and as a security against foreign aggression it would be far better for them to remain part of a military empire able to afford them assistance for defence, and under the guarantee of Europe, than to form a weak separate state, which could be invaded and conquered by powerful neighbours like Austria and Russia, whose interests and policy it must ever be to prevent the establishment of a strong free state at the mouth of the Danube.

As there is nothing in the condition of Servia and Roumania to induce us to look to them for a settlement of the Eastern question, do the European provinces of Turkey afford any element for a solution of it, and for the substitution of a Christian for a Mohammedan Government? We will endeavour to answer this question in another article.

THE WILDS OF CHESHIRE.

If that unreasonable American, who has become nearly as great a nuisance as Lord Macaulay's New Zealander, were to take his morning's walk through the country in which I am writing, he would become very tired before he tumbled into the sea,—small as the island is. We have bad roads, and sometimes no roads, across the wilds. We have hills, streams, rocks, and moorland, but few trees; and, in consequence of our altitude, very short summers. I don't at all mean to say that this is the wildest part of England. In Yorkshire, and in counties farther north, the moors are giants in comparison with these; the scenery is rougher, and on a larger scale altogether. But this much at least I may say of this part of Cheshire,—that there is nothing further south more rudely beautiful, and that there are some spots here as extraordinary and as well worth seeing as any in the island.

People who know only the southern counties are sometimes startled to hear that between them and Scotland,—in the heart of England itself,—there are red grouse in abundance, with plenty of heather, hills, and even mountains. Many of the readers of this paper probably remember that the red grouse,—*Lagopus Scoticus*, or *Britannicus*, as Yarrell so properly suggests,—is found nowhere but in the British Isles,—in England, Wales, Ireland, and extensively in Scotland. As far as I know, this bird does not appear farther south than the north of Staffordshire; the heather of the southern counties holding black game, indeed, but not the red grouse. With this very exclusive bird I am glad to have formed, close to my present home, an intimate acquaintance, which has turned out agreeable and profitable, at any rate on one side; and I shall not close this paper without having recorded some incidents of our companionship.

Let me, however, in the first place, settle in some measure the boundaries of the "Wilds of Cheshire," or what are so called; for in reality the wilderness of which I am writing embraces a strip of Derbyshire and a small portion of the north of Staffordshire. No one, I suppose, will care to take out an Ordnance-map to hunt for particulars; but if a line were drawn from Woodhead, which is on the borders of Lancashire and Yorkshire, somewhat to the west of the boundary-line between Cheshire and Derbyshire, till the north of Staffordshire is reached, it would pass through the "wilds." It would, however, pass through one district between Tintwhistle and Disley which is not wild, or not wild enough to deserve any mention here.

Macclesfield Forest, which lies in the very heart of the "wilds," and which is mentioned in Ormrod's "*History of Cheshire*,"—a book to which Mr. Beresford, who writes in the "*Reliquary*," has had access,—was at one time exceedingly extensive, but the district now called by that name is said not much to exceed four thousand acres. The old forest seems to have been in existence before the Doomsday survey was made; and the Saxons,—thane and serf,—who sought refuge in it after the Conquest, gave the Normans some trouble. An old cemetery was discovered at Butley, near Prestbury, not very long ago, which the learned in such matters declare to have been crammed with Saxon corpses, after some slaughter rather more wholesale than was even then common. The stones had been subjected to great heat, and a substance was found on them which was supposed to be blood. The history of the forest is probably something as follows:—Before the Conquest, the whole neighbourhood of Macclesfield belonged to the famous Earl Edwin, against whom William had a peculiar enmity. The scattered Saxons fled for refuge to the wilds of the forest, formed themselves into disciplined bands, and, in their turn, plundered their oppressors. But the Norman Earls of Chester displaced them, and created an office of Master Forester, which carried with it the power of life and death; and Sir Vivian de Davenport, the first master, adopted for his crest a felon's head, haltered. The lawless bands who inhabited the forest suffered by the vigilance of these masters and their eight subordinates. Two shillings and a salmon were given for the capture of a "master-robber," and one shilling for any member of his troop. But the time came when this excessive power passed away, and the masters were succeeded by stewards, who (Ormrod tells us) "were appointed and removed at pleasure, until the reign of Edward IV." Then it was that the forest came into the hands of the Stanley family, with whom it remains now, and has remained since, with this exception, that Oliver Cromwell gave it to Sir William Brereton, from whom it returned to the Stanleys at the Restoration.

There are very few trees indeed in Macclesfield Forest, and scarcely any that have not been recently planted; perhaps there were never very many, and it may be at least a question whether "a forest" necessarily implies trees. However, in 1662, an event occurred which, if the account given of it in "*Admirable Curiosities*" is to be at all relied on, may well explain the cause of its bareness. "July 20th, 1662, was a very stormy and tempestuous day in many parts of Cheshire and Lancashire. . . . The same day in the forest of Maxfield,"—Macclesfield,—"in Cheshire, there arose a great pillar of smoke, in height like a steeple, and judged twenty yards broad, which, making a most hideous noise, went along the ground six or seven miles, levelling all in the way. It threw down fences, also stone walls, and carried the stones a great distance from their places;

but happening on moorish ground not inhabited, it did the less hurt. The terrible noise it made so frightened the cattle, that they ran away, and were thereby preserved. It passed over a corn-field, and laid it as even with the ground as if it had been trodden down by feet. It went through a wood and turned up above an hundred trees by the roots; coming into a field full of cocks of hay ready to be carried in, it swept all away, so that scarce a handful of it could afterwards be found; only it left a great tree in the middle of the field, which it had brought from some other place. From the forest of Maxfield it went up by a town called Taxal, and thence to Wailly,"—Whalley,—“Bridge, where, and nowhere else, it overthrew an house or two; yet the people that were in them received not much hurt, but the timber was carried away nobody knew whither. From thence it went up the hills into Derbyshire, and so vanished.”

The scenery of this neighbourhood reminds one of that of the Scotch Highlands, but is very much in miniature. Hills,—mountains, perhaps,—craggs, heather, bilberries, rushes, peat, burns, a pure invigorating air, mists in season and sometimes out of season, scattered cottages, sheep, stone walls,—these are some of the characteristics of the “Wilds of Cheshire.” The winters are long and white, but I think not exceptionally cold. Sometimes we have great storms of wind, when no one could live on the hill-tops. We have little spring, but the summer is generally beautiful, and so is the autumn. In May there are a hundred great banks, blue with the wild hyacinth, or bright with the first green of the bracken fern. Later on, there are skies bluer than the banks, with a hot sun, which drives the cattle to the brooks; and the country, which in winter does not hold a bird beside grouse, a few partridges, a snipe, and a passing crow, is full of the song and the presence of summer visitants. The hills stand about us, and shut out a distant view, but you can climb them and look over forty miles into Wales. By the 12th of August the heather is purple and smells like honey; the hot air comes off the crags, and you see it mixing with a cooler atmosphere all along the hill; the tributaries to the one large brook shine as they come down their irregular beds; the shepherd, for once in his life, calls his dog to heel, and keeps the wall as he passes on; the grouse lie for this day, and perhaps for the next, almost like partridges in the south; and we labour along till the evening, in our dreamed-of, hoped-for, prayed-for, magnificent toil.

On the property of a friend of the writer, five miles from his residence, and in Staffordshire, there is a place called Ludchurch, which is well worth seeing, and which, I think, could be seen by any one who asked permission. Large rocks, deep heather, young plantations, surround this wonder of the wilds. Ludchurch is one long uneven split through a mass of solid rock. It is sometimes nearly closed at the top, sometimes open to the extent of several yards. Look up, and

you see great fringes of heather which grow on the moor above; look at the rugged walls, and all manner of ferns and mosses seem to spring from the crag. The chasm is considerable, both in length and height. Altogether, it is a place of consequence; it might hold forty thieves, and possibly did hold them, in the time of the "flash men" of the neighbourhood, or in the time of Robin Hood. Its only occupant now is a gigantic wooden woman, white not very long ago, but fast becoming black, as all things do which are exposed on a peat soil. Only imagine a stranger wandering through two hundred yards of chasm by moonlight, and seeing this monstrous human figure right before him on a rock, the terrible guardian of the glen!

The inhabitants of the forest and its neighbourhood are small farmers who work, for the most part, with their own hands, some of them keeping two or three servants. With one or two exceptions, and those amongst my immediate neighbours, they are ignorant and penurious. They lounge along the country and up the hills with long, slow strides; and, if they chance to meet a neighbour, they can hardly make up their minds to part with him for twenty minutes or half an hour. They are a fine sturdy set, but they want energy.

The tremendous ravine which reaches out some distance from the present forest is called Wild-Boar Clough. Here are some scattered farm-houses, and here is the parsonage. The clergyman has two churches under his care, and receives for his labours the use of a house and rather less than £140 a year. There is a tale, believed by some of the people, of a wild-boar hunt which took place here not quite two hundred years ago. The boar was killed some distance from the Clough, at a place since called "Kill Hill." However this may be, I have no doubt that there was a time when the place was full of wild pigs. There is an old farm-house in the forest, called "The Chamber," which is said to be built on the site of a hunting-box used by the kings of England,—though I do not know what kings,—none, I think, of later date than Edward IV. I have often thought, and hugged myself in thinking, that perhaps no trained falcons flew over these moors since the time of those kings, whoever they were, till I flew mine.

Foxes in this neighbourhood are vermin,—just as they are in the Highlands and in many parts of the Lowlands of Scotland. To kill a fox here is no crime, but I hardly know whether I could bring myself to do it. When I first came into the country I said to a gamekeeper, "Why, in the south of England, where I come from, they would not speak to you if you shot a fox;" and he replied, "Then, sir, the only difference between them and us is, that the people won't speak to you here if you don't shoot one."

Some thirty or forty years ago the game was very imperfectly preserved on the forest. The farmers shot the grouse and coursed the hares. They kept their own greyhounds. However, a certain pre-

servation went on, for the farmers interested in coursing took care that the hares were not killed by any foul means. They also kept a pack of harriers,—or perhaps beagles,—amongst them. A Mr. Grimsditch, a lawyer, agent to the Leghs of Lyme, and once M.P. for Macclesfield, paid duty for these hounds, and I suppose they were his; but certainly Lord Derby's tenantry kept and used them, the master being scarcely ever present at the meets. Edward Jodrell, who died a few months ago, an excessively fat man, was the huntsman, but he could run well in those days. It is a difficult matter, in this country, to ride after hounds. The wake-week,—early in October,—was a time of sport and festivity here forty years ago: then half-a-dozen farmers were hosts to men and dogs, each farmer undertaking to feed the whole hunt for a day. I have had some difficulty in making out the precise history of the packs which hunted the forest, but I think there is no doubt that there were two besides that which I have named. No fox-hounds, of course, can come into such a country as this. So much the worse for the foxes, which are trapped and shot, as I have said.

There are not many partridges on these hills, but those which I have killed have certainly been smaller and darker in plumage than the southern birds. I think the plumage is naturally darker, though all feathers are stained on a peat soil; so is the wool on sheep. Snipe show this stain in a very marked way on their light underfeathers. They breed here, but I am told are not so numerous as they were some years ago. Pewits are here in quantities in the spring and summer, and the young afford very good sport with a dog that is used to them. They often lie like stones. The golden plover is seen in the autumn, but not very often. Curlews occasionally breed on the moors: I once found a nest; a young one had just chipped its egg, and was chirping inside. Woodcocks, I am persuaded, breed on the Swythamley property. Four or five miles off, there is black game; but the red grouse is the bird of these parts,—the chief and the king of all.

I don't know whether it is fancy, but I certainly believe that the English grouse are larger than the Scotch. I was particularly struck with this, the season before last, when shooting in the Highlands. My birds there were in excellent condition; but, whether old cocks or others, I never picked one up without thinking it small. I once shot a grouse on these moors that weighed 28 ounces; and I once hawked one that weighed 27 ounces after the falcon had eaten his head. Of course they were both old cocks. One has heard of greater weights, but they are surely very few and far between.

These moors were closed last season, as I need hardly say. The grouse lay dead on them, generally near water, before it began, "as if they had been sown," to use the expression of a shepherd who spoke to me about it. Such a disease as that which killed them in

such quantities is a wonderful thing ; and scarcely one of the theories set on foot to account for it is satisfactory. I was at one time very much in earnest in explaining the presence of the disease by the fact that some moors were undershot, and therefore overstocked ; but my belief in this notion has faded. I still, however, most honestly believe that the wholesale destruction of the birds of prey, especially of the peregrine falcon, has been a great curse. Not at all because she prevented overstocking,—for man can prevent that with his gun,—but from the circumstance that hawks take the weakly and diseased birds first, simply because they can catch them easily. Nature knew that, in her own course, diseases would come ; she knew also that, to prevent them spreading, they must be stamped out ; and she sent her falcons on the moors. Her armed cruisers sailed out to sweep the seas of the pirates that infested them. But man knew better ; he looked only at the good of the moment ; he defied her laws, and broke her balance altogether. I think he has been disturbed by the consequence : I most thoroughly hope so.

The only other theory at all in vogue in which I have any faith is that of heather itself, tainted by very late frosts, creating a sickness in the birds that eat it. This seems to me very plausible and probable.

Of course, then, there was no grouse-hawking in these wilds last season : I never either flew or shot a grouse all through it. But perhaps some people might like to know what I have done before ; and I may say, I think without immodesty, that I have brought the sport almost to perfection.

I came up here from Northamptonshire,—with a very short interval between times spent in a town,—about eleven years ago, having then had little practice with any hawks except merlins. With these little birds, however, I had excellent sport both with skylarks and pigeons. The female, being larger than the male, is flown at the latter quarry ; but she is scarcely strong enough for it. Both males and females I flew at larks. And it is a pretty sight to see a cast of these little hawks ringing up after a good lark, till pursuers and pursued are literally lost in the blue sky. Such a flight, however, is hardly ever successful, as far as killing the quarry is concerned. I have often killed a lark with a cast of merlins, after a straight flight of a mile, or nearly so, when the distance from the ground has varied from twenty to a hundred yards. But the other is the real sport ; and if merlins could only be induced to continue it through a season, they would be most valuable hawks. I have paid the greatest attention to them, and have done more with them than almost any one else. But we who fly hawks all know that merlins cannot stand disappointment. They have their own courage, which is almost beyond every other ; but failure beats them. There are, indeed, dodges which, as I am not now writing a treatise on falconry, I have not space to mention, that help us a good deal through the difficulty ; but quite enough of

it remains. The sooner the merlins of the year are entered to larks the better; for after about the 8th of September this quarry,—than which nothing can be more active,—has finished the moult. Then, and only then, begins the mounting time, when they all go up into the skies together,—two hawks and one lark. A merlin should have killed a good many larks before this, or he won't fly them at all. He will certainly leave them when they begin to rise.

After I came here, I flew merlins, and very pretty sport I had; but till I came here I did not know, to anything like its full extent, the wonderful power of the peregrine;—I did not know that I could make a bird take grouse more surely than any one can make a dog take hares. Once having tasted this glorious sport, this sport of real consequence and name in the eyes of every one, the merlin mania began to leave me. Say what you will, sport consists partly in the intrinsic value of the object of pursuit. Of course, some sport depends upon adventitious value, or there would be no fox-hunting. But intrinsic value is a great matter. Thus, if I were spinning a minnow, I would rather take a trout two pounds in weight than a pike eight pounds, because the trout is more intrinsically valuable. There might be other reasons, but that would certainly be amongst them. And so it is that a man who has killed grouse with hawks will soon cease to care so very much for killing larks with them.

Peregrines are sent to me from Scotland in the middle of June, and they are treated in this way. Rather heavy bells, very much heavier than they will afterwards fly with, are fastened to their legs. Their jesses are also put on. An outhouse of some sort, having a platform made in it, and the window,—open,—protected with perpendicular wooden bars, is then their home for perhaps a week. The falconer feeds them on the platform twice a day with raw beef-steak, whistling with a loud whistle during the operation. He also introduces them to the lures,—affairs of wood, red cloth, and wings of birds,—to which beef is fastened. They will soon come down from the platform, and eat from these lures on the ground. When they know them and the whistle well, the doors may be thrown open, and they may go. Regularly every morning and evening, and even before the fixed feeding-time, the hawks will be ready for their meal. Whistle, and throw down your lures on the lawn or field, and your birds will soon be about you, as anxious for the lures as you can be to see them there. They must be at liberty in this way, day and night, for three or four weeks. When they absent themselves for a day or more, and begin to prey for themselves, take them up, or you will lose them. All this is preparation. Their wings are strong; they know the lures; in a measure, they know you who feed them. Probably they will not allow you to touch the jesses with your hand. Take them, therefore, with a bow-net. Hood your birds; carry them on the fist; break them to the hood; tame them. In ten days they

may be on the wing again ; nay, even in less time, possibly, flying the quarry you design for them.

We fly only the female birds at grouse,—at least I do ; for, though the tiercel is really large enough to take them, and does take them in his wild state, as a trained bird he is not, as a rule, to be depended on like the falcon. I once killed an old grouse with an excellent partridge tiercel ; but I could never be certain that he would fly this quarry in earnest. Tiercels are excellent for partridges ; but the falcon takes to grouse at once, and if she is successful in one flight out of her first two or three, will stick to them afterwards. I need not say how important it is that she should begin with every advantage. I have used, but very rarely, a brown chicken, the size of a grouse, to encourage a young and disappointed hawk. Anything is better than constant disappointment.

The excellence of a peregrine, in game-hawking, is that it should fly as high as possible. Hence, perhaps, the origin of the term “high-flyer,” as applied to others than hawks. For the falcon is put on the wing before the grouse or partridges rise, and she should get up eighty or a hundred yards before they are sprung. I have seen some of my hawks a quarter of a mile high, when you might have taken the bird for a boy’s kite, “waiting on” me and the dog most patiently. Then comes a dead point from the dog, and you hasten to spring the game ; or you wake up an old cock grouse which goes off crowing, and with that curious twist in his flight which grouse-shooters know so well. Down comes the falcon from her pitch ; you hear the rush of her wings, and the hiss of her bill as she passes high over you to the quarry. If the grouse be immediately under her when he rises, he will probably be dashed to the ground amidst a cloud of feathers, as her great foot rips up his back ; or his wing may be broken ; or,—especially if he has been flown before,—he may drop backwards on the heather untouched from under her very feet. Then she is at a disadvantage. But she sails round, and perhaps tries to hit him on the ground. Most likely he gets up, and is off at a terrible pace, while she, with her long wings, must get into her swing before she can hope to reach him. But if he is not hit, and does not fall without a blow when she stoops, a most exciting race begins, which is for life or death. His wings now work away with most rapid strokes ; now he closes them for two seconds, and passes through the air like a bullet ; now they strike even quicker than before. If you are standing on a stone wall as he goes by, he is away before you can exclaim. His round, dark form rushes past as the noise of his feathers rings in your ears. It is the very best pace of all ; it is almost inconceivably rapid : it is for dear life. But she ;—her stoop from the clouds brings her close behind him ; it gives her a fearful impetus ; she is simply flying him down, and knows that he is dying before her. Yet he may live,—not in fair

flight, not from excess of speed ; but he may live still. There is a mountain burn near at hand ; it is shallow now, but its banks have been undermined by the winter rains, and the heather droops over them like a screen. Under them at once, good grouse, for you deserve your life ; you have struggled half a mile to save it. There is no dog near to put you out ; no marker to tell tales about you. True, she may "wait on" above you,—“make her point,” as they say ; but you are a good way off the falconer, and something else will be put up before he reaches you. I think you are pretty safe. But if no such friendly cover is found,—and there is uncommonly little time in which to select it,—the grouse dies, either cut over by the falcon, or taken by her as he drops by a wall-side, with some indefinite sort of hope of getting between the stones.

It may easily be understood that amongst these wilds we require markers. A flight may be out of my sight directly when it has topped the hill. Here is one of the disadvantages of flying hawks in any country but a tolerably flat and open one ; still I have plenty of boys at my command, and they “man” the hills for me ; and practice makes them as sharp as needles. Their orders are to put out a grouse which has taken refuge, while the falcon remains near it, and to mark, as far as they can see, the direction of any flight. I could hawk on flat ground, in Derbyshire, if I liked, by going a little distance from here ; I like, however, to keep my hawks at home, and I am not sure that in all respects this hilly ground is a disadvantage.

Some falcons have a way of coming down and hitting the dog, if he does not find game soon enough ; and I have once or twice, but not lately, had a little reminder myself, by receiving a blow on the head. The birds never hurt me ; but I have known them make a pointer howl. My birds, flown so close to home, are now never lost, because they are taught that, in a certain place in the field, a live pigeon will, without doubt, be fastened. To this, if by chance they are out all night, they come by daybreak, and I get up in order to take them.

So much for the peregrine falcon, as flown here. One word about the goshawk. This, as most people know, is a slow, short-winged bird, larger than the peregrine. It is generally got from France or Germany. I have killed many rabbits with the female bird, and one,—but only one,—hare in my life. Disposition most unquestionably sulky ; general conduct, until really in flying order, most temper-trying. But I like the goshawk,—fit as she is only for the slowest flights, stupid and troublesome as she is to train. I can imagine she has an attachment to her master when she knows him, and she can certainly take more rabbits in a day than the peregrine can take grouse.

A brook, rising in the hills, runs down the forest and Wild-Boar Clough to the river Dane. It is full of trout, but they are very small. The Dane, however, contains fair-sized fish, and, as it is well

preserved, plenty of them. There are some bits in this river most exquisitely picturesque. Overhanging trees, boulders, rocks, low and most likely-looking water-falls, are level with you, or above you, as you wade up this splendid stream. A fly can be thrown in nearly every part, and a minnow can be spun anywhere. I walk up the middle where I can, spinning to right or left, and rather above me. When I get to a water-fall,—if two or three feet of falling water, eight or ten yards wide deserves the name,—I still spin above, and across, and over every half-foot. The big trout are there, or have been, as I know. Besides this, we have pools in the neighbourhood most strictly preserved, as I need not say. I have killed capital trout and perch in them.

My task, I think, is very nearly done. I have attempted to give some description of a part of England scarcely known by name, and never seen by strangers, unless we except our own visitors, or some accidental "tourist" straggling from Buxton. Yet it has its beauties; and, what is more to the point, in venturing to write about it, its very marked peculiarities. There is nothing else quite like it. As to the field-sports, they are not unique; but it will be allowed that hounds,—some years since at least,—followed on foot, grouse shot in England, beautiful and prolific trout streams, together with falconry upon the moors, are not every-day matters. The only objection to this happy valley is, that it a little too much perhaps resembles that in Rasselas. One can't get out.

THE WOMEN OF THE DAY.

I HAVE often thought that of all the pleasant, easy positions which Providence can assign to one in this wicked world, that of the *Advocatus Diaboli* at Rome would be amongst the most charming. After the advocates of canonisation have done their best,—after they have expatiated on the virtues, excellences, sanctities, and super-human self-sacrifices of the candidate for whom they claim the glories of sainthood,—after they have toiled away in the endeavour to prove that a heavenly crown is the meet and fitting reward of those who, while on earth, have despised earthly pleasures, and fixed their thoughts on things above,—after they have demanded triumphantly that the object of their veneration should be proclaimed by acclamation a saint of saints, it must be so pleasant to rise up and remark that, perhaps, there was something to be said on both sides the question. You would have no need to undergo much preparatory labour; you are not required to trouble yourself with any profound study of the life whose holiness you are about to dispute; you have got your little quiver full of ready-made darts, which you can let fly indiscriminately at any saint you are deputed to assail. Saints and sinners are very much alike, you may urge, when all is said and done. Everything is a matter of taste; and if some people happen to like fasting, and wearing sackcloth, and sleeping on thorns, they deserve no particular credit for following their natural inclinations. There have been very queer stories about anchorites: hermits have not always been solitary in their cells; saints have been known to exhibit a preference for Magdalens who were fair as well as frail; and so on through the stock round of insinuations. Moreover, the especial advantage of your pleading lies in the fact, that its success in a forensic point of view depends not upon your own eloquence, but on the esteem in which men hold the object of your invective. By an odd trait in our queer human nature, we all of us, somehow, do relish a little sneer at the things we are taught to venerate. Even the reverend clerics of the Consistory will chuckle silently when you hint that Augustine only turned a saint when he had found that all pleasures were vanity; and you may not despair of making a point, even in a priestly audience, when you intimate that Origen may have regretted the irreparable sacrifice which secured the permanence of his reformation. We all of us have our fetishes, and yet, by some strange anomaly in our composition, the more blindly we worship, the more we enjoy a joke at their expense.

Unfortunately, the post of the Devil's lawyer is not accessible to ordinary men; and in these days of progress, falsely so called, it seems doubtful how far Rome itself may long preserve the peculiar institution. It is, however, some comfort to reflect that the talents which would have shown so conspicuously in that elevated position need not necessarily be wasted even in our own happy land. If you wish to earn a reputation easily, the devil—I am speaking not in a theological, but in a practical point of view—is always ready to retain you for his counsel. By accepting the diabolic brief, you can always earn a reputation easily, if not honourably. Your instructions are simple, and with a modicum of talent your success, such as it is, is absolutely infallible. You have only got to select some person, order, principle, institution, or cause which your fellow-men have long held in esteem and honour, and to pick holes therein with such skill as you possess. If your critical faculties are small, you can always make up for the deficiency by the strength of the paradox you endeavour to propound. All students desirous of entering upon the calling could hardly, I think, do better than study carefully the series of articles which have appeared of late in the *Saturday Review*, on the subject of woman and her failings.

The *Saturday Review* has always been a sort of literary lion's mouth for the reception of impeachments against established objects of worship. Its public likes the class of articles to which I allude; and therefore I can quite understand their insertion. Class journals must study class prejudices; and the educated classes have fully as many whims and dislikes as any other. To men of the world, that is, to men whose tastes or fortunes have caused them to be acquainted with many phases of life, there is something at times exquisitely absurd in the manner in which all things, human and divine, are treated in the *Saturday Review*, from the point of view of the clever college don, who belongs to a West-end club, spends his long vacation on the Continent, and is the accepted authority of his common-room. But still every journal must suit its constant readers; and I no more blame the *Saturday* for studying the weaknesses of university men, than I blame the *Beehive* for speaking tenderly of Sheffield unionists, or the *Grocers' Gazette* for being hard upon co-operative stores. We must all live; and if our public like their Stilton high, we must not object to the presence of maggots in the repast we provide for their enjoyment.

In a commercial point of view, the only objection to dealing in the caviar and pickles line of business is, that the public always require their pickles hotter, and their caviar more stinging, with each successive meal. People like, no doubt, to have their sensibilities outraged, and their feelings shocked. But then the worst is that the number of feelings and sensibilities which can be assailed is limited. When you have libelled your great-grandmother one week, you are com-

pelled to defame your grandmother the next, if you wish to keep up the sensation ; and after that, if you make a hit, you are sure to be called upon to dissect your mother's frailties for the amusement of your admirers. It is to this painful necessity I attribute the last series of attacks which have made the success of the *Saturday Review*. The writers in that journal are, I have no doubt, as a body, gentlemen by birth and education. Now it always has been a tradition, and, whatever may be said, it still is a tradition amongst English gentlemen, to speak respectfully and affectionately of English women ; and I will do the *Saturday Reviewers* the justice to believe that when they commenced the *Devil's Advocate* duty they never contemplated being brought to impugn the claims to respect of the class from whom their own mothers, wives, and sisters were taken. The temptation, however, was too great to be resisted. The *Saturday* public had grown tired of sneers at philanthropy and progress ; Mr. Gladstone and Beales, M.A., and the *Penny Press* had been offered up as victims on the altar till the spectacle of their immolation had ceased to draw. The serial essays, after the *Spectator* and *Tatler* fashion, upon diners-out, tame cats, male flirts, and so forth, had run their appointed span. And so, in lack of a better subject, the *Saturday Review* determined to make a dead set against English women.

The selection showed great discretion on the part of the editorial management. The *Saturday Review*, as far as my own observation goes, is, I should say, a paper which numbers amongst its readers an unusually large proportion of the female sex. Its politics, if I may venture to say so, are of an eminently feminine order ; its cleverness is just of the kind which women think very clever ; and its satire is of a calibre which women can understand and appreciate. A very slight knowledge of the female nature was sufficient to justify the conviction that tirades against women would find an attentive if not a sympathetic hearing from a feminine audience. Ladies, like the Americans, as described in *Martin Chuzzlewit*, are fond of being "cracked up." But, like children, they would sooner be teased than not noticed at all. Indeed, the very fact of active attack is a covert compliment to their paramount influence and importance. Women find no difficulty in pardoning both those who love and those who hate the sex ; their real objects of antipathy are those who neither love nor hate, but are simply indifferent. Moreover, these satires against classes are never unpopular with the individuals of whom the class is composed. Every single member of the body inculpated considers himself,—M. or N., as the case may be,—the brilliant exception which proves the rule. The satirist cannot turn to an unknown reader with the "*de te fabula narratur* ;" and no one will ever of their own accord alter the *te* into a *me*.

Granted the expediency of the assault, the *Saturday Review* has,

I must also admit, been singularly happy in the choice of an assailant. It could not have been an easy thing to find a critic who would treat the subject with what Mr. Ruskin would call a loving hand. A writer was required, who had made the littlenesses, foibles, and humours of respectable women his especial study; but who had not approached the subject from the *Lovelace* or *Don Juan* point of view; who was ready to expose by inuendos, and defame by hints, without committing any breach of conventional propriety; who, even while he sneered, was never to forget that he was writing for a female public; whose whole mind was wrapped up in the contemplation of woman and her weaknesses; who knew how to scratch with one hand and fondle with the other. Who this new commentator on the eternal subject of woman may be I neither know nor care to know. With laudable discretion, a sort of mystery has been observed about the authorship of this series of misogynist articles; and part of their success has been due to the fact that sundry ladies of some distinction have been credited with their literary parentage. But, for my own part, I think the articles, if not masculine, are certainly not feminine. If a woman had undertaken to say all the ill of her sex she could think of, she would never have qualified her invectives with so many saving clauses. Just as in ladies' novels the characters are always deep black or virgin white, so a lady-satirist would have known of no pity in her satire. Moreover, no woman could have ignored so strangely the whole element of passion, which plays so great a part in the lives of all women,—even the most worldly, frivolous, and conventional.

But, on the other hand, very few men,—or, at any rate, very few men of much ability,—would or could have written the papers in question. The "*infiniment petit*," the fiddle-faddle, the foibles and trifles of the social aspect of female life, do not attract or interest men who lead active lives in the world. Both for good and for bad, other cares and other thoughts than the consideration of the merits or demerits of female fashions occupy the minds of busy men. Yet it is obvious that the author of the articles in question has given an amount of study to women hardly consistent with the occupations of a man-like existence. His only books may not have been women's looks; but he has studied the books which women read, and the talk which women talk, and the thoughts which women think. Judging, then, entirely from internal evidence, I should say that the writer of these papers must be looked for in the list of young curates. In the words of the French play, "*Nourri dans le sérail, j'en connais les détours.*" The secrets of the gynæceum are open to him. He has lived in the harem, though not of it. He has suffered beneath the matronly yoke; he has been oppressed by the feminine protectorate; he has groaned under the patronage of pious spinsters; and out of the fulness of his

heart the mouth has spoken. Moreover this theory, if it be correct, excuses what to our minds is the most offensive feature of these attacks on women. If their author was an ordinary man of the world, who used words in the same sense as common people use them, I could not acquit him of having wilfully accused English women of being immodest and vicious,—false wives and bad mothers. But long experience has taught me that the clerical intellect, as a rule, knows of no degrees of comparison. There used to be a story in my time at Cambridge of a young curate who was in the habit of describing himself as having been an abandoned sinner, before he was converted to a state of grace. At last his self-accusations became so vehement that some of his male parishioners catechised him as to the supposed excesses of his undergraduate and unregenerate career. Every sin to which young men are addicted was suggested in turn, and indignantly repudiated by the alleged reprobate. It finally appeared that the reformed prodigal had read a novel in chapel, and played cards on a Sunday evening. In vain his interlocutors assured him that, in the common use of language, these offences, heinous as they were, did not justify his claim to be called an abandoned profligate. To the end of the chapter, he spoke of the time when he lost three and sixpence at loo as the period when he spent his substance in riotous living. In much the same way I have noticed that our clerical instructors treat all degrees of sin with the same indiscriminate censure. For the woman who dyes her hair, the same condemnation is doled out as for the ladies who would patronise Foundling Hospitals, if such institutions existed in England. I think it, therefore, possible that the Saturday Reviewer, supposing him always to have belonged to the clerical order, really meant nothing more by his tirades than to assert that there was a great deal of folly, vanity, and dissipation amongst certain classes of English women. If so, I pardon his heart at the expense of his head.

But any apology of this sort, which may be made for the individual writer, does not apply to the character and purport of his writings. The articles in question have met, I admit fully, with a genuine and not altogether undeserved success. We have had somewhat too much of late of wholesale adoration of women and womanhood. The Poet Laureate and the Tennysonian school have set an example of woman-olatriy. It was been the fashion to assume in poetry, if not in prose, that women were necessarily superior to men in nobility of heart, and refinement of mind, and purity of disposition. Woman-worship has invaded not only the pulpit, but art and science and literature ; and, to confess the honest, simple truth, we men have grown rather weary of having the excellences of women perpetually held up to our adoration. As a matter of fact, we all know that men and women are very much alike ; that angels in the household, whether male or female, are extremely rare ; and that

each of the two divisions of humanity, has its own fair share of virtues and failings, faults and excellences. We have grown tired of one perpetual song of praise in honour of womanhood; and we are haunted by a suspicion that our poetry, our literature, our art, might be more powerful and nobler if the necessity of toning down everything, so as to suit the conventional rules of feminine propriety were not recognised so universally or obeyed so servilely. It is, no doubt, a great thing to boast that the literature of the present day is adapted for the home reading of our daughters and sisters. But, in return, it is, to say the least, possible that our grandchildren will care more for the works which our grandfathers wrote, and which were not adapted for circulating libraries or boarding-schools.

If, therefore, the author of the "Girl of the Period" had contented himself with pointing out that petticoats and purity did not necessarily go together, and that women were by no means the angelic and ethereal beings which poets of the Patmore order have been accustomed to pourtray, I for one should never have dreamt of protesting against the new evangel. I might have thought, as indeed I think, that the truth thus taught was one recognised in fact, though not in theory,—that it was hardly worth while to demolish seriously a graceful conventionality, which offended against nothing save the canons of abstract veracity. But the self-constituted censor of our English women goes far beyond the limits of satire. We are told week after week that the ladies of the day study the dress, manners, and morals of the demi-monde,—that men refuse to marry because they prefer "the queens of St. John's Wood, in their unblushing honesty," to "their imitators and make-believes in Bayswater and Belgravia,"—that we can no longer pride ourselves upon the modesty and purity of our women,—and that the only hope for England lies in the possibility that some miracle may replace the almost extinct breed of good mothers.

Now, we fancy that we have heard all this before. The famous complaint,—

*"Ætas Parentum pejor avis tulit
· Nos nequiores mox daturos
Progeniem vitiosiore"*—

is one which has been repeated under many forms in every age and country ever since the world began. We have no doubt that Sarah thought very badly of Rebekah and the young women of her day, and that Rebekah, in turn, had a very poor opinion of Rachel. But still because the accusation has been brought a thousand times without reason, it does not absolutely follow that it is not true in the thousand-and-one'th; and the imputation, as brought by the Saturday Review, is undoubtedly a serious one. The most furious of the reviewer's tirades concludes with the remark that, "it is terribly significant of the present state of things when men are free to write

as they do of the women of their own nation." How far this freedom is rightly exercised, or is, indeed, employed by any one save the author of this doleful lamentation, I do not care to inquire. I will admit, for the sake of argument, that this gentleman, who tells us, a little further on, that English women "have placed themselves beyond the pale of masculine respect," is really a representative writer. And I do acknowledge most fully that the quarter in which these assertions are made invests them with an importance not due to their intrinsic weight. It is, indeed, for this reason, and this reason only, that I deem them worthy of comment, and, if it may be, of refutation.

Even in these days of universal statistics about everything, there is no record kept of the proportions of virtuous and non-virtuous wives,—of modest and immodest young ladies,—of tender and heartless mothers. It is therefore impossible to prove by chapter and verse whether the women of our time are more or less well-behaved than their mothers and grandmothers. As far as the current literature of an age is any test of its moral standard, I should say that our own day shines by comparison with any other era. Opinions may differ as to the genius of our authors, but I defy you to name any really popular publication which is not conducted with a decorum unknown as late as thirty years ago, or to point out a really successful work of fiction which might not be read out loud in a young ladies' seminary. When, I wonder, in the name of common sense, was the golden age,—the Arcadian period of English womanhood? Was it in the days when the comedies of the ingenious Mrs. Aphra Behn were the delight of our stage? Was it in the time when Swift wrote the Odes to Celia, or when Sterne told the story of the Sentimental Journey? Was it when Don Juan was the rage of the day, or when Lady Blessington was the fashionable novelist of the period? I am not going to fall into raptures over the superior virtue of our own times. Every age has its own vices. But I confess that profligacy and dissipation do not seem to me by any means especially characteristic of the living generation. And of this we may be certain, that the moral tone of the women of a nation will always correspond more or less closely to that of the man. "As the husband so the wife is," is a saying which holds true as an almost universal rule. Now, whatever may be the case in certain instances, it is notorious that, on the whole, the men of the present day are more temperate, more hard-working, less daring in their vices, if not less vicious, than their predecessors. If this be so,—and that it is so can hardly be disputed,—it would follow, almost as a matter of course, that the women of our time are likely to be at least as well behaved as their mothers.

So much for the antecedent probabilities of the case. I confess, however, that I do not see how the eulogists or the detractors of modern English womanhood are to make out a defence supported by

positive, irrefutable evidence. In the long run the question comes to a matter of opinion. The reviewer thinks that English ladies are no better than they ought to be. I think they are quite as good as can be reasonably expected. Both of us, for anything I know, may be justified in our conclusions from the premises on which we argue. I may have been exceptionally fortunate in my female acquaintance; he, on his side, may have been as exceptionally unfortunate. But of this I am certain, that neither of us can know but a very small section of the class about which we argue. Of course, my friend, the censor, assumes that woman is an open book to him,—that he knows her and her ways as he knows the alphabet or the Apostles' Creed,—that he is as conversant with every phase of her outer existence and inner life as if he were a compound of Asmodeus, Don Juan, Fouché, Guy Livingstone, Father Clement, and Madame Rachel. But this assumption of omniscience is one of the stock tricks of our literary craft, and I, at any rate, as an old workman, cannot be expected to believe in it. The first proof of knowledge, says the Greek sage, is to know that you know nothing; and I doubt whether my critic has yet attained this preliminary phase of learning. The ladies I meet with in society may, with here and there a rare exception, be Lady Audleys, Becky Sharpes, Messalinas, and Mrs. Mannings; but I don't know it, and I don't believe my friend of the Saturday does either. Of all the numerous company of journalists it has been my happiness to be acquainted with, the gentlemen connected with this celebrated periodical are the most fond of talking about their work in public. I may, therefore, without being liable to the imputation of undue self-glorification, assert that I do know pretty well the class of society in which Saturday Reviewers are wont to relax their overtaxed intellects; and this much I can confidently state that in the salons of West-bourna, South Kensington, and Wimpole-cum-Wigmore-dom "girls of the period" are not typical of the ladies at whose houses I make their acquaintance. It is, indeed, possible that I who write do not mix in circles of sufficient fashion and distinction to meet the women who have supplied the reviewer with an inexhaustible theme for satire. Marquises and millionaires, I confess with a bitter sense of humiliation, are not persons with whom I habitually consort. How I might be affected in my estimate of womanhood if my name appeared morning after morning amid the distinguished guests at the entertainments recorded in the Morning Post, I do not pretend to say. But of this I feel confident, that, in that event, I should not continue to be a constant contributor to the Saturday, or any other journal. Writers of leading articles are not, as a rule, to be found in Belgravian palaces. Moreover, limited as my experience of aristocratic salons may have been, it has been sufficient to create an impression in my mind that if I were to see more of them I should find them as dull and as decorous as those of ordinary middle-class society.

I do not dispute for one moment that there is a section of the great London world in which extravagance, ostentation, silliness, and folly, are prevalent to a very marked and, perhaps, novel degree. From one cause or another, there has been of late years not only a great increase in the wealth of the country, but a still greater increase in the ease and rapidity with which fortunes are made. And, in consequence, there is a large class whose fortune is out of all proportion to their growth in taste and refinement, and whose sole ambition is to assert their social rise in life by imitating and exaggerating the follies and vanities of the fashionable world. Shoddy is not conducive to culture either in the Old World or in the New. And I have no doubt that amidst the women of over-rich society, and of that still larger society which aspires to be over-rich without the means to support the aspiration, there is to be found any amount of folly, affectation, and vulgarity. Where these qualities are found, it would be absurd to expect a very high moral tone; and I am quite ready to believe that in this branch of London society there are "girls of the period," wives who are unvirtuous in talk, if not in action, women who look on marriage as a mere pretext for undesirable freedom. But still, when all is said and done, I utterly and entirely disbelieve that even in this semi-fast, semi-fashionable society, can the women be fairly described in the terms which the reviewer has applied to them. The circumstances of my life have caused me to see a good deal more of society in other lands than I think is common among English literary men. I have in consequence known something of societies in which such a state of things exists as that which my critic would have us believe prevails in English homes. All I can say is that the outward signs which indicate general demoralisation in lands where the duties of married life are habitually disregarded, seem to me to be entirely wanting here. Even, however, if I am wrong in this estimate,—and I will admit that I do not pretend to the intimate acquaintance with "girls of the period" which Saturday Reviewers appear to enjoy,—I can feel no doubt that the class in which women are to be found to whom such language as that of the Review can be applied with any semblance of truth is not representative of English society.

The men of England may be annoyed that such accusations should be made, but they know the facts too well to pay heed to them; and, as I stated at the commencement of this article, women all the world over are by no means very angry with those who attack them: they understand the flattery which lies hid beneath the sneer; and they know that the irritation of their assailant, like the anger of a pet spaniel, can always be subdued by alternate slaps and caresses. The real gravamen of the charge consists in the fact that it is accepted as true by foreign critics, and supposed to be genuine by

classes in this country who have not the means of comparing the original with the copy.

This being the case, I own that I find a difficulty in selecting the language in which such a charge should be repudiated. Speaking from my own experience of the world, I should say that English women were as well conducted, kindly natured, affectionate, modest, and virtuous as the women of any other nation. If I was placed upon the rack, and compelled to tell the truth, nolens volens, I might perhaps add that I do not feel equally certain of their being the loveliest, wisest, and most intelligent of their species. It is not in my nature to go into rhapsodies; and I neither think nor say that my fellow-countrywomen are in all and every respect first amongst the foremost. But this I do say, that they are at least as good as their neighbours. They are affectionate sisters, good wives, and loving mothers; and any one who says aught to the contrary is either ignorant or dishonest.

Still there is no smoke without fire; and the appearance of the articles against whose truth I enter my humble protest is in some way a sign of the times. The women of our day are not the counterparts of their mothers. Times have changed, and women have changed with them. The old conception which prevailed till the last generation, that when a woman had married young, had kept her home in good order, had reared a family of children, and had lived in harmony with her husband, she had fulfilled the whole aim and object and purport of her existence, is dying out of fashion. Our women know more, read more, think more, than they did in the good old days; and we cannot reasonably expect that they should be contented with the same narrow round of pleasures and duties. It always seems to me that these "*laudatores temporis acti*" are engaged in solving the insoluble problem of how to eat your cake and have it. If you are to have women who are fit to share the thoughts, desires, and aspirations of men in a high degree of culture, you cannot also have women who cumulate the functions of nurse, housekeeper, and cook. Notwithstanding the fashion for co-operative stores, the principle of the division of labour is the ruling one of our day. In virtue of that principle, we have to a great extent exempted women from household and menial cares; and by so doing we have secured a degree of culture and refinement not compatible, I think, with any very active interference in domestic matters. I often wish that the wiseacres who repeat the parrot cry about the happy time when ladies cooked their own dinners, and mended their own clothes, and did their own marketing, could know something of the family life of countries where women still perform the duties I see urged so eloquently upon their attention. In the north of Europe, the wife is still the "good woman of the house." There, the ladies cook the

dinners with their own hands, wait at dinner to a considerable degree, pass no small part of their time in the kitchen and the store-room, and even lend a hand at the wash-tub. I do not dispute the fact that if you wish your women-kind to be only a superior description of upper servants, you had better seek for them in these patriarchal climes. But even the courage of a Saturday Reviewer would shrink from the idea of marrying, or living with, these "brave housewives." As a rule, I am afraid you must say that the excellence of women as housekeepers is in inverse proportion to their excellence as intellectual companions. I do not say that a clever educated woman may not keep her home comfortable, and her household in good order, and bring up her children excellently. Intelligence and organisation will supply the place of personal labour and constant supervision. But I do say, that if the nursery, and the kitchen, and the laundry are to be considered the proper sphere for the exercise of women's energies, it is idle to imagine they can also be ideal companions for the drawing-room and the study. Persons in the habit of reading the advertising columns of the daily papers must be aware that there are two classes of advertisements emanating from ladies who desire to fill the position of housekeeper to a single gentleman or widower. The advertisers of the one class describe themselves as domesticated and fond of cooking; the other base their pretensions on being musical and agreeable companions. The distinction thus drawn appears to me representative of modern womanhood,—to apply to wives equally with housekeepers.

In these remarks of mine I have not alluded to the modern theories of woman's mission, which find favour with Mr. Mill and the advocates of female suffrage. In this respect I own honestly I am a weak-kneed reformer. If women were to get votes, or even to sit in Parliament, I don't know that the world would be much the worse; but, on the other hand, I am by no means sure that the world would be much the better; and, therefore, for my own part, I am very well content to leave things as they are. But common honesty compels me to confess that I believe women were created for other objects than bearing children, and that I doubt whether when a woman has married a husband and made his home comfortable she has done all which God or man have a right to expect of her. But my wish is now to treat the subject from a purely masculine standpoint. Looking at the great woman-question from the male point of view, I hold that we are unreasonable in expecting that English ladies should unite the inconsistent merits of the intellectual companion and the bustling housekeeper.

If I am right in this opinion, it is idle to imagine that this transition period, during which women are emerging, as a class, from the kitchen and store-room into the study and library, will not be attended with a great amount of extravagance and absurdity. And

this phase will, undoubtedly, afford good scope for small social satire of the ordinary Saturday Review calibre. There is room for any number of pretty, twaddling essays about æsthetic women, pushing women, little and big women, Papal women, women in orders, and so on. This class of articles belongs to the same order of literary productions as the sermons against crinoline, the invectives against hair-dye, the denunciations of tight lacing, which appear from time to time in the daily press. They are not very wise or very profound, nor perhaps in the best of taste; but they are written for women to read, and women like to read them; and they have, and are expected to have, about as much practical influence as the tirades in favour of the sweet innocent white muslin dress of young girls in the bygone time which Madame Fargneil, attired in silks and satins and diamonds, used to deliver nightly in the "*Famille Benoiton*," amidst the applause of the gallery. No sensible man would think of criticising this class of literary essay, any more than he would think of denouncing the pretty little pictures in *Punch*, of young gentlemen flirting with the young ladies they are about to marry, which form the delight and charm of the "*girls of the period*." For my own part, I am not amused by a sketch of a little child asking the gentleman who has just kissed her why he does not kiss cousin Sissy too; but I am convinced the people who can be so amused cannot be depraved or demoralised. You might as well accuse a man of being intemperate because he was partial to ginger-beer, or of being a gambler because he liked playing cards for counters.

I should wish, therefore, that the critic whose utterances I have criticised in turn, might tell us whether he really meant to accuse the women of our day of anything more than vanity and folly. If not, he ranks at once amidst that great class of writers who, from time to time, have sharpened their wits upon the foibles of the female sex. But if he meant more than this,—if he understood the purport which his words conveyed,—if he intended to imply that our English women were immodest, heartless, and vicious, I deem him to have uttered a very foul and base libel, which it behoves men, even more than women, to protest against loudly. That English women have faults no candid judge would pretend to deny. How far these faults are due to defective education, to unequal social conditions, or to natural qualities, is a point on which I am not sure that I have any positive opinion, and on which I am certainly not going to express any opinion. But this I may truly say, that the faults are of the head rather than the heart. No man, I think, can have lived much abroad without having a very genuine affection and regard, and almost reverence, for the women of our own land. They may not be the wisest, they are not perhaps the most lovely of their sex; but they are true wives, affectionate daughters, kind sisters, tender and loving mothers. Of course there are exceptions; but the exceptions

seem to me to be very few relatively. I have known a great many Englishmen who respected very little, and believed in very little; but I have hardly known one who did not place an implicit trust in the goodness of the women of his home. It would indeed be an evil day for England if the time should ever come when our countrywomen should be spoken of habitually in the terms which the Saturday Reviewer has thought himself justified in applying to them. When such language has been used, it ought not to be passed over in silence. Women can always hold their own in the contest with their critics. If every English newspaper were to go on writing articles about the extravagance of female attire from now to the end of the year, they would not lessen by a single item the milliners' bills which will come due next Christmas. But the case becomes different when the attack is levelled, not against fashions, but against reputations. And it argues ill for the condition of a country when men hear the women who are near and dear to them libelled without resenting the insult. It is for that reason I have entered this protest of mine.

LIFE STUDIES.

No. II. THE ANGLO-ROMANS.

SOME great philanthropist,—I'm not sure it was not Martin Tupper,—once said, "What should we have done with our superfluous Irish if America had not been discovered?"

It was in thinking over this great fact that a very startling problem presented itself before me, and, like a sturdy beggar, would not go without compulsion. The problem was this:—What is to become of those emigrant English who winter annually in Rome, and who now are excluded from the Holy City by the combined terrors of Papal Zonaves, Antonelli, Garibaldians, explosive shells, detonating newspapers, and percussion cigars?

For years back, a certain class,—or, to speak more correctly, certain classes,—of our countrymen have paid their winter visit to Rome with a laudable regularity. There was a sprinkling of Ritualistic folk, who loved to coquette with Popery, who affected draperies, and were addicted to altar-cloths, and who took very kindly to the poetry of religious worship, as evidenced in incense and displayed by wax tapers; but yet, with all these, wouldn't quite go over to Rome. They took their Romanism as draymen do their porter,—half-and-half,—and they found it agreed with them.

These people really liked Rome. It lifted them out of the common uniformity of daily life, and, so to say, dramatised existence to them; which, as they were very ordinary humdrum sort of folk for the most part, was no small boon. They were not indeed on the stage, nor of the company, but they were privileged to stroll behind the scenes, and to stand by the flats, and talk to a supernumerary; and all of us who have tasted that blissful enjoyment at the Haymarket may imagine the delight it conferred when the piece was played at St. Peter's, and with the whole strength of the company.

Next after these came a few fashionable leaders, who, believing that the world consists of about three hundred and fifty people, all told, know they will surely see a fourth or a fifth of that number gathered together at Rome to speculate on the prospects of the coming season at home, and wonder where the remaining two hundred and odd are then hibernating. These are fine specimens of the Bull breed. They are rich, dignified, and well-mannered. They pay liberally at hotels, and are dear to the hearts of livery-stablemen and ciceroni.

Third in order are the small English, not come exactly for economy,—the day for that is long bygone,—but come to perform a line of their own denied to them at home, and give themselves a winter's experience of exaltation and excitement, such as, in a condensed form, people experience by inhaling nitrous oxide. This seems too bold a simile, but it is not. The round game of high life enacted by these persons is just as unreal, just as absurd, and to a spectator just as amusing, as any lecture-room under the laughing-gas.

These folk have their evening parties, their soirées dansantes, their receptions, their drives, with refreshments from Spielman's,—so wonderfully like the real article that a careless observer might not detect the difference. They dash their company, too, with foreigners like their betters, and if they have not got red stockings, they secure a pleasant sprinkling of purple; and monsignori with gold crosses and very soft eyes give a wonderful flavour to the tone of a society whose aboriginal members came from the prairies near St. John's Wood and the hunting-grounds of the Regent's Park.

Last of all, there is the motley multitude, unclassified and unclassable. The young fellow who has got six months' leave before he joins the 909th at Athlone;—the other lad who has an unlimited congé, having been plucked at the last competitive examination. Then there are the three elderly ladies who travel with one maid, four dogs, and a vetturino. There are the young ladies who come out to study sculpture, and wear blouses and manly hats, and try to ride like Miss Hosmer. I do not speak of Yankees, who are legion, but who are no more like our own people than a starved Apennine sheep is like a browsing Southdowner or a plethoric Cotswold.

And now, will any one tell me what is to become of these and their fellows? Into what regions are they to wander? What Canaan of gossip and tea fights, penny whist and halfpenny scandal is open to them?

Some one once grew eloquent and indignant at the thought of fox-hunting over the graves of the Cæsars, and tally-ho-ing within ear-shot of the Forum. But I have no doubt that Timmins finds an added flavour in his champagne as he sips it beside the tomb of Metella, and detects a higher excellence in his Allsopp as he blows its froth over the Tarpeian rock. There is no denying it, but with all our newfangled discoveries,—our railroads and telegraphs, our photographs and American notions,—our ancestors had much that they have not transmitted to us. There was a time when grapes grew in Madeira, and men made wine thereof; and there was a time when Rome was a fine place to winter in, and Bull for a few hundred pounds could swell it there to his heart's content. In those days there were no sbirri to spy into your writing-desk, nor a secret police to dog your outgoings. You ran no risk of being potted by a patriot, or ripped by a regenerator of Italy. You had nothing to fear from

cardinal secretaries, French generals, nor Carbonari; and I must say Italy was, as they say of the babies, very good when she was asleep.

O for that dear old time of intolerance and ignorance when nobody asked for justice, or thought himself badly used if denied it! O for the happy days when liberty was treated like leprosy, and men put in strict quarantine who had caught it! O for the pleasant era when one's letters were opened at the post, and you felt that your joys and sorrows were sympathised with by those who had never so much as seen you! Not that all these have gone so completely that no traces of them remain. Far from it. The police minister but a couple of months ago showed our secretary of legation, Mr. Odo Russell, "a touch of his quality," and people who take certain liberal English newspapers know how carefully the Holy College selects for transmission and delivery only such as contain no contaminating doctrines.

And yet we would willingly accept all these things and more, could we only secure a secondo piano in the Via Babuino, or a small apartment in the Piazza di Spagna. Rome was an absolute necessity to the British nature. It was a fine thing to have a place that stimulated the hearty downright indignation of our natures, and enabled us, as I once heard a very diminutive curate observe, "to beard the lion in his den." It was so spirited to go and preach against purgatory, where the whole population rather thought well of it; and it was so courageous to our High Church people to play with fire, to flirt with saint-worship and costumes, and never be led out of the Thirty-nine Articles! This playing Tom Tiddler's ground with the Pope was vastly amusing to our Ritualists, though now and then his Holiness did catch a stray parson and carry him off triumphantly to his fold.

All this, alas,—all this is now over and done for. Rome is no more safe than Mexico. Once more I ask,—What are we to do with our Rome-frequenting Britishers? Is it a case for compensation? I declare I think it about as just as the Alabama claim. What if Lord Stanley were to propose a Congress to determine what recompense should be afforded the British public for the loss of the vested right in Rome,—of the privilege they have so long enjoyed of abusing the Pope and condemning his doctrines? It was a fine, healthful, cheery pursuit,—a grand antibiliary, and highly conducive to that noble sense of self-esteem by means of which Britains feel "they never can be slaves."

These Rome-hunters were a perfectly distinct class from all the other English travellers. You knew them at a glance. They had none of the vulgar flippancy of the Rhine tourist; nor were they like the thick-shoed Knickerbockerists you met in the Oberland. You could even distinguish them from other loungers in Italy. They had that steadfastness, that air of purpose about them, which showed there was a goal before them and a fixed object; and how they despised all that lay between them and their destination! Even at Florence

they gave you to perceive that they only halted to take breath. They looked in at the Pitti and the Uffizzi like people who felt that these were but trifles to what was before them. They lounged through the Galleries with that condescending look we see people assume who peep in at a children's party on their way to a ball. They were bland, —very bland; a touch of gentle melancholy, perhaps, stole over their features as they saw these poor Florentine creatures so happy with their Uffizzi, and so pleased with their Pitti.

How consistently they told you on the very briefest acquaintance that they were not going to stop there! How ingeniously they let you know that they had been to do Fiesole, the San Miniato, the Campanile, and the gates of Ghiberti, all to show that they were John Murraying a place they never meant to abide in! And how innocently they inquired if the Arno was always so empty, and the Café Doney so full; if the balls at the palace were always so raffish, and if the bankers invariably cheated you in the exchanges? When they entered into society at all, they did so like people who look in at a servants' ball,—half condescension, half curiosity,—as though they wanted to see how "Jeames" took out his partner, and how Mary Anne did her "trois temps." Not that in reality the tone of Roman society was in itself very Attic or exalted. The assumption was simply the tyranny of the people who "went further." The man who has been at the "sixth cataract" is a despot for life over him who has never gone beyond the fifth.

Even when they talked politics, how they separated themselves from the things that pertain to the Palazzo Vecchio, and bore only on Victor Emmanuel! They soared into the higher regions, where Popes write pastorals and cardinals plot schemes of state. And how the grandeur of eternal interests made such small questions as taxation, revenue, national defences, and national independence shrink up in their view to utter littleness!

Such was the man who went to Rome, and who can go there no more. And, I would ask, in what orb of creation is he now to display those great gifts of his? Rome was the Mecca of Cockneys, and where are they now to turn, with their fervour for statuary and their horror of saints,—their devotion to art and their detestation of what has preserved it?

MADAME DE SEVIGNÉ.

IN the whole "Memoirs History" of France no one realises so essentially our type of a lady as Madame de Sevigné. We come in contact, amid the pleasant and varied walks of this delightful literary garden, with every development of female, good, bad, and indifferent. Persecuted or neglected queens, like Marie de Medicis and Queen Claude; gaudy mistresses, like Montespan and Dubarry; proud, ignorant princesses, like Madame la Palatine; wicked beauties, like the Countess de Soissons; aspiring attendants, like Laure Concini; and many an ambitious fool, like Mademoiselle de Fontanges, who, attaining the object of their ambition, lose it as soon as won by mental incapacity to retain it. We jostle lovely sinners, often developing into lovely saints, like Agnès Sorel and La Vallière; and we meet with real saints, like Madame Guyon, whose austerities fill one with horror. We turn a corner, and we find sovereigns indifferent to murder as a stepping-stone to power, such as Isabelle de Bavière and Christina of Sweden; while in niches and shrines we discover heroines and martyrs, such as Jeanne d'Arc and Marie Antoinette; but nowhere in this fair pleasaunce do we find the type of the perfectly well-bred and accomplished lady so truly developed as in Madame de Sevigné.

Her mind, her language, her writings, are all imbued,—saturated, so to speak,—with good breeding. Her lively piquant wit, her gentle satire, have a perennial charm, because she is always natural, and never degenerates into the Gallic vice of exaggeration. All situations, trials, excitements of life find her fortified with what may be called the religion of society. There are no indications that her constant self-restraint was dictated by true piety, but her social religion afforded an admirable substitute. Naturally worldly, addicted to Court life, and therefore prone to the scandal of that scandal-loving period, she checks the prurience of her charming pen, and turns the shafts of malice to gentle pleasantry. The fine tact and native refinement of her mind form an alembic which turns all into gold, lending a new interest to the political intrigues and to the vicious society of that day; and this is done by the skill with which she manipulates every awkward detail. None but a lady "pure et simple" can even touch the pitch of that period without defilement; and the mere fact that she should have been both a keen observer

and exact chronicler of contemporary events, vividly reproducing with most delicate touch a society containing such ingredients as Scarron, Ninon de l'Enclos, and her own dissolute cousin, Bussy Rabutin, proves her to have possessed a power quite peculiar to herself. With what a charm, too, she invests the individual woman! How we sympathise with her in the girlish ardour, the enthusiastic admiration, she feels for her dissipated husband! How we long to bear her company in her enforced solitude at Les Rochers; how we share her inevitable disappointment when, after a few years of happiness, she comes to realise his unworthy character! Nowhere does she violently or openly blame him. Her truly refined instinct shrinks from publicly exposing this grievous domestic wound. But one perceives gradually that the light has faded out of her life, and that the treasures of her love are now devoted to her children. Although from her high rank and extraordinary mental gifts she is a Personage at that flaunting and impure Court,—handsome, singularly attractive in conversation, intelligent and refined beyond her age, and known as an ill-used and neglected wife, yet never for a moment, spite of the amorous persecution she underwent for years from her mad cousin, Bussy Rabutin, does scandal attach to her name. A most rare distinction was this in a society where the moral code was so ill-defined that the reigning monarch, like Jupiter, was accepted as god as well as king, and possessed the power of granting plenary indulgence for every crime committed and for every criminal inculcated by his act! Now and then the coquetry of the woman peeps out in her own pleasant way, but it is for the daughter or the son that she desires to fascinate, never for herself. And how we all know and love that daughter with a feeling almost as extravagant as that of her mother! With what interest we dwell on each detail,—how she is sitting for her portrait, how she is indisposed, or how her husband loves tennis, at which game he excels. How hard we feel it that such beauty, such talents should be banished in distant Provence! How we hope that every fresh letter will bring us news that she has a Court appointment! How we moan over her ill-health, and see with the keen mother's eye that her beauty fades, and that she grows thin and pale! How our hearts go forth into joy and gladness when parent and child are to meet! How we picture the scene,—the stately castle of Grignan, standing on a broad plateau, crowning one of those low arid hills peculiar to Provence, overtopping the town, a grand and noble edifice, of which few were spared by the Revolution. Grignan, like the magic palace, says Madame de Sevigné, raised by Apollodorus, with its walls, and Gothic towers, and bastions, and buttresses, was ready either for defence or for delight, but withal strangely nude and bare of trees and shade, torn by the tempest, and baked yellow by the sun. Without, it had braved many centuries of mistral, and reflected the dazzling sunsets of ages. Within, the great courtyard was crowded

with richly-dressed attendants, for great is the pomp and vast the riches of the governor, who represents King Louis. To the right, through a fine Gothic arch, a wide flight of marble steps leads to the great hall above,—to a confusion of emblazoned windows, blazing in the southern summer, glittering armour, banners borne in the crusades, tapestry, carving, pictures, and statues. Here, again, are marshalled powdered lacqueys, waiting to conduct the guests through long suites of saloons stretching beyond, all glittering with mirrors, gilding, painting, and brocades. Beyond, in an octagon boudoir, deep in the recesses of a distant turret, sits the expectant daughter, mistress of this wondrous castle. Madame de Sevigné, who has passed many a week between Paris and Grignan, accompanied by La Mousse and Corbinelli, pauses not an instant to observe anything. Looking neither right nor left, she rushes forward, that mother of mothers, and clasps her daughter in her arms. Why should these two ever part? Why should so unique a love “ever sever?” Well for posterity it did, or we should never have known that bright particular jewel in modern literature, Madame de Sevigné’s Letters.

But we must now say something of her life, rather than indulge only in a panegyric, although in this slight sketch we desire to dwell on her private more than on her social career, observing her rather as “Notre Dame de Livry,” and the recluse of Les Rochers, than either the brilliant Frondeuse,—familiar with all that was great and noble in rank, literature, or politics,—or the master-mind of the “*précieuses*” of the Hôtel de Rambouillet, or the careful chaperone of a beautiful daughter.

Her maiden name, Rabutin Chantal, reminds us that she was grand-daughter of the foundress of the Visitation, the friend of St. François de Sales, canonised on somewhat doubtful grounds. But the so-called saint, Madame de Chantal, not including family affection among her list of pious duties, took no heed to the welfare of the early-orphaned child, who was thrown entirely on the benevolence of her uncle, the Abbé de Coulanges, whom she has taught posterity to know and love for her sake as the “*bien bon*.” Her residence with him in the forest of Bondy, four leagues distant from Paris, doubtless fostered that enthusiastic love of nature so prominent in her writings. As a girl, she describes herself as sitting, pen in hand, under the shade of the forest trees, scenting the honeysuckles, and interrupted by the singing of the nightingales. In manners and person she was gay and spirituelle, fresh-complexioned, and golden-haired, rather than orthodoxly handsome. Her bright nature looked out of her laughing eyes, and captivated her contemporaries much in the same way as her wonderful style captivates posterity. Her wit and originality were hereditary, for she was born a Rabutin Chantal, and even the pedantry of her early friends, Chaplain and De Menage, or the affectations of the Hôtel de Rambouillet, failed to injure her

taste. Before and after her marriage she was intimately connected with Madame de Rambouillet and her daughter Julie, and early attracted attention in that singular group of *littérateurs* and fine ladies assembled around them in the *Hôtel de Rambouillet*, whose mission was to cultivate virtue in an age of immorality, introduce delicate feeling and a refined diction when swearing and coarse expressions were the mode, and to raise men of letters, philosophers, and savants to their proper level in polite society.

Molière, who never shared in these Attic festivals, has, in keen, sarcastic verse, so covered this whole fraternity with ridicule that the regenerative work which it really accomplished in humanising Parisian society has been too much overlooked. When Molière caricatured the *Hôtel de Rambouillet*, its task was already accomplished, and its influence was declining. Platitudes and affectation had displaced good taste and propriety of language; the *précieuses* were grown old; the *littérateurs* had written and spoken their best; and the shadows of the past gathered fast in those once brilliant saloons. But in former days, when Henri Quatre, along with la belle Gabrielle and a dozen beauties more fair than wise, scandalised France, —when Louis XIII., victimised by the political and social tyranny of Richelieu, in the dreary days of the Fronde, utterly neglected the organisation of a Court and courtly society, and ignored both literature and literary men, —when great ladies and mighty heroes spent their time in playing at revolution, —then the *Hôtel de Rambouillet* stepped in to supply a social want, and largely influenced manners, literature, and reputations. The *précieuses* who assembled there, —almost all women of the highest rank, —gloried in bearing this much-ridiculed name. *Précieuse* was then accepted in its literal sense, —“precious,” —and conveyed in this single word the very perfection of womanhood, —dignified and graceful manners, a well-cultivated mind, natural gifts, and extreme propriety of conduct, —the whole harmonised by unalterable tact and good taste. In its palmy days of social power, the association tolerated no uneducated or disreputable members, though the rejected candidates might be of the highest rank; neither the divine Julie, —who required twelve years of courtship from the Duke of Montausier to reconcile her to marriage, —nor her refined mother, the Marquise de Rambouillet, would have permitted the smallest impropriety either of conduct or expression.

Madame de Sevigné, whose tastes were formed in this refined atmosphere, learnt from it that social religion of good taste which so remarkably distinguishes her while living at a Court famous for profligacy; and thus preserved her purity in a position of extraordinary temptation. One can well understand, however, the ridicule with which the *Rambouillet* circle was looked on when it came to be opposed to the brilliant freedom and daring immorality of the age of Louis XIV., —who actually dared to drive from his Court and to

disgrace the divine Julie, then Duchess of Montausier, for a too strict supervision over that royal preserve,—the maids of honour! Fléchier, however, in the funeral sermon of this same duchess, still dared to eulogise that ill-used lady under her poetical name of Arthemise, and to call on his hearers “to remember with veneration those saloons where talent was purified and virtue rewarded.”

It is certainly a curious anomaly that a style so natural, coupled with such extraordinary powers of reading and describing character, should have distinguished Madame de Sevigné, formed as she was in a school so antagonistic to individuality or purity of style, however respectable for purity of principles. Her mind was free and original in no common degree, and her girlish musings in the forest of Bondy and the park of Livry seem to have impressed her with a pervading love of nature, and saved her from the glaring affectations of a précieuse, either in style or in manners. At the Hôtel de Rambouillet she met the Marquis de Sevigné, already noted among the young nobles of the day for his extravagance and inconstancy. In the age of Louis XIV. even the exclusiveness of this sanctuary of virtue was not proof against the general corruption, and men and women appeared in the ruelle who would not have been tolerated in earlier days. When only eighteen Mademoiselle Rabutin de Chantal became the wife of De Sevigné, a selfish voluptuary, utterly unable to appreciate her. He was a man steeped in the vices of the time, yet with enough charm of person and polish of manner to create in her heart a passionate love, which he was too libertine and volatile either to cultivate or reciprocate.

In the first years of her marriage he introduced her to Les Rochers, that charming retreat in the depths of Brittany which she has taught us to know so well, and where at intervals so large a portion of her life was passed. She came afterwards to love it dearly as the scene of those brief days of married happiness, when life appeared to her young and fresh as her own hopes, the birth-place of her children, the placid home to which she retired when weary of Court intrigues and political struggles, and where, finally, she came to meditate on death amid the woods she had planted. Her husband's conduct rapidly degenerated from coldness and neglect to open infidelity. A scandalous intrigue he had formed with the notorious Ninon de l'Enclos became public. Ninon at least was free from the vice of rapacity, for she refused every present he offered except a ring. But when she was banished from Paris by Anne of Austria, on account of her profligacy, other and less scrupulous mistresses brought the reckless De Sevigné to the verge of ruin. Madame de Sevigné's uncle, the Abbé de Coulanges, insisted on his niece obtaining a legal separation of property for her own sake, and for the sake of her children. Even that literary reprobate Tallemant des Réaux calls out shame. “Sevigné,” says he, “was a bad man; he ruined his wife, who was the most

charming woman in Paris." Eventually this unworthy husband lost his life in a duel, caused by a scandalous intrigue with Madame de Gontran, a well-known Aspasia of the day, upon which the cynical Tallemant remarks, "that he disapproved De Sevigné's taste, as he should have much preferred his wife." She was at Les Rochers when the news of the duel reached her. The loving woman flew to Paris, but her husband was already dead. Her grief was as vehement as it was durable; and in the depth of her distress she condescended so far as to beg Madame Gontran to give her some of his hair and a portrait. Years afterwards, meeting his antagonist, the Chevalier d'Albret, she fainted away. Yet, short as was the actually married portion of her life, the blighted love of which her husband was the object cast a permanent shadow over her whole career. She allowed no second marriage to endanger her peace, but in the very heyday of womanhood devoted herself to her children and the re-establishment of a fortune materially injured by De Sevigné's selfish extravagance. The perfectly well-bred indifference with which she learnt to receive the addresses of the great men of her age shows how inflexible was her will when her judgment and her inclinations coincided. No vulgar ambition could tempt her refined nature, and she courteously received and declined the pressing admiration of the hero Turenne, of the Prince of Condé,—brother of the great Condé,—of the ostentatious Fouquet; and also of her cousin, the seductive Bussy Rabutin, who constantly and persistently endeavoured, but always unsuccessfully, to inscribe her name among his many conquests. Not the least amusing episode of her life is connected with this clever but eccentric man. He had been intended by family arrangement to become her husband, but at that time contemptuously refused her hand. Becoming deeply sensible of his mistake, when she was no longer free, he professed for her boundless admiration, and endeavoured to engage her love on the plea of her husband's unworthiness. Their near relationship and the frank affection of familiar intercourse offered him every facility. Bussy, more and more in love with his fascinating cousin, insinuated himself into the confidence of her husband as well as her own. He was often present when painful domestic scenes displayed the brutality of De Sevigné. He sympathised with her; he deplored her husband's infidelities; he maliciously related every circumstance that could inflame her resentment, and finally offered to become a mediator. Perfidious Bussy! His fair cousin, adoring her young and innocent truant lord, contrasting her cousin's tender devotion and sparkling wit with the harsh neglect and silent contempt of her husband, readily accepted his good offices. When he was able to inform her that all Paris knew that Ninon de l'Enclos was her rival, and while he listened to her passionate indignation, he so little understood her character as to conceive the happy moment was come when he could change friendship into love. He returned home, and addressed to her a letter in which he very skilfully expresses his feelings.

"Love me, dear cousin," he says, "and I will help you by loving you to revenge yourself all your life long." This letter fell into the hands of De Sevigné, and Bussy was forthwith banished from the house by the mutual desire of husband and wife. Bussy, thus defeated, became both desperate and enraged. He publicly abused her in his "*Histoire Amoureuse des Gaules*," publishing all her letters, and relating every confidence with which he had been intrusted. Again his mood changed, and in humble contrition he threw himself at her feet, begging for a pardon which she most generously accorded him. But, if cold in love, she was most warm in friendship, a fact which is proved by the vivid interest she dared to take in the trial of that victim to the caprice of princes, the unfortunate Fouquet. None of her letters are more simple, graphic, and touching than those written during his trial; and yet the style, so apparently unstudied, was, like all perfection, the essence of art, for we know that she was from girlhood carefully habituated to composition. There is little eventful in her own career except its remarkable social success. Her wonderful pen that "trotted over the paper" reproduces every public event of the reign of Louis XIV., from the intrigues of the Fronde down to the remarkable dominion of Madame de Maintenon over the aged monarch, with such graphic yet playful simplicity, that the reader forgets, in her vivid descriptions, that she herself was but a spectator. Absent or present, her whole life was, like her letters, dedicated to her daughter, Madame de Grignan. "To read your letters and to write to you," she says, "are the final objects of my life. Everything gives place to you. To love as I love you makes every other feeling frivolous."

St. Simon, in his *Memoirs*, mortifies us greatly by speaking of Madame de Grignan as cold and reserved, "but little worthy of her mother's idolatry." If so, it is but a repetition of the old maxim;—"one loves and the other allows herself to be loved." Madame de Sevigné's life was passed almost entirely at Paris, at Livry, or at Les Rochers in Brittany, with rare visits to her daughter in Provence. No other Frenchwoman has ever described the *vie de province* so enthusiastically, or has so loved her woods, her gardens, and her fields. She leaves the Court to find actual companionship in the trees she planted, in the walks she planned, in the hills, the rocks of Brittany. When alone at Les Rochers, or visiting her uncle the Abbé de Coulanges at Livry, in the forest of Bondy, she forgets Paris, the Court, the world,—all save her daughter,—in adoration of nature. The triumphs of the month of May, the nightingale, the thrush, and cuckoo, first ushering spring into the woods, are to her more glorious than the victories of the Grand Monarque. In the autumn she passes whole days out of doors, so as to appropriate all that she can of the departing season; as one hangs over the death-bed of a dying friend. She grudges every hour of "those fine crystallised days of autumn when it is neither too hot nor too cold."

There is a kind of Pantheism in her worship of nature when she writes of her silent friends the trees, their grateful shadow, their delicious perfume, their delicate tangle linked with eglantine and ivy, the running brooks, and harmony of birds. "Let me," she says, writing from Vichy, whither she had gone to drink the waters, "but be solitary, and I shall be content if I may only enjoy this charming scene, the river Allier, the goats, the peasantry dancing in the fields. Give me this, and all the world may leave me. The country will cure me." It was the same at Livry, when Horace Walpole visited her and describes in his letters "the charming pavilion built for her by her uncle, with its gardens and wooden bridges, where she usually awaited the arrival of the courier and her daughter's letters." But Livry was but Paris in the country. Her true Thebaide was Les Rochers, where an absolute and almost stern solitude awaited her. There she indeed lived with her own thoughts, alone with herself, and with rich store of memories hung like faded garlands upon every tree, shading like passing clouds the surrounding hills, deepening each rocky glen, murmuring in every hill-side stream. Here she came, a young and loving wife, and was too often left solitary and neglected by an unworthy husband. Here her children were born, and here she came to know the pleasures and anxieties of a mother. Here she passed her retirement as a widow, and here she was sought out, flattered, and admired as the brilliant and celebrated marquise. The place was knit up with her whole life. "How can I look," says she, "at my dear Rochers, at my walks, my gardens, my boudoir, my books, my rooms, without a bursting heart? There are happy memories; but some recollections are so fresh and so bitter I can scarce bear them."

"I am launched," says she, "into this life without my own consent, and I must quit it too. How shall I go? Where? By what exit? When?" In those dogmatic days, which led up to the persecution of Port Royal and the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, she might be called somewhat of a heretic. Perhaps, when she and Madame de Grignan exchanged confidences, it was well that Bossuet was not listening. Indeed, her daughter laughingly calls her a heretic. In return, Madame de Sevigné admires her daughter's patience for having passed two entire hours with a Jesuit without disputing. Her sympathies are all for Port Royal; she does not care for her rosary, and in the chapel she builds at Les Rochers the altar is sanctified with a most unorthodox dedication, "*Soli Deo honor et gloria.*" Very rank heresy indeed! "I belong," says she, "neither to God nor the devil. This troubles me, but, *entre nous*, it is only natural. I do not belong to the devil, because I fear God, and have an innate principle of belief. I do not belong to God, because his law is hard, and I cannot condemn myself to destruction. I am a tepid Christian, of whom there are a great

number,—a circumstance which does not alarm me as I sympathise with them. Yet we know God hates them, and so I must alter and reform; but it is difficult." The fact was, her sincere and candid mind found no affinities in the superstitious dogmatism of the age.

"I have found my woods extraordinarily beautiful and sad," she writes to her daughter. "All the trees you remember small are grown up into large, straight timber, with a delicious shade. They are forty or fifty feet high. I feel I write of them with a maternal pride. Remember I planted them all, and that I knew them, as Monsieur Montbazou said of his children, 'not bigger than that.' The solitude here is made expressly for day-dreaming. The foliage is much greener than at Livry; whether it is the rain, or the nature of the soil, I know not, but there is no comparison."

One absolutely sees her, on a fine, clear autumn day, walking stiff in hand, with a light, quick step, through the grille enclosing the courtyard, towards the alleys named by her Infinite, or Solitude, her face radiant and smiling, carrying a book,—Tasso, perhaps, or Montaigne,—followed by a servant armed with an umbrella. Not a sound breaks the silence around; a few leaves drop softly down on the fresh turf, and the sun slants through the trees, making here and there a golden mist; a squirrel leaps from branch to branch and scuds away into the recesses of the wood, alarmed at the moving figure beneath. By-and-by she reaches one of the picturesque pavilions she has built,—the Capucine perhaps,—where she stops and rests, reading the while; then she wanders on to another and farther retreat, and we lose her when the sun sets and the day darkens, as she passes into the deeper shadows beyond. Her last visit to Les Rochers breathes a certain sadness. She is old, and has become rheumatic; and for the first time she is dull. She cannot live with nature as she used. "My child," writes she, "it is incredible how sad and insipid the days are; they pass away, and time with them. God knows what also passes away. Ah! let us not think of it. Yet I do think of it all the same." The shadows of death are already gathering around her, kind and gentle lady, and she knows it.

But as if no memory of suffering was to be associated with her home, death comes to her far away in distant Provence whilst visiting her daughter. In 1690 she left Les Rochers for the last time, and was seized at the castle of Grignan with malignant small-pox. Her daughter, her idolised daughter, was under the same roof, but left her,—O shocking and appalling ingratitude!—to die almost alone. Nor did this much-adored child even bid her a last farewell. Her kindly and social spirit passed away in solitude. She was buried at Grignan under the shadow of the huge feudal castle, far from her home, divided from every friend, "a stranger in a far land."

A NICE CORRESPONDENT!

"THE glow and the glory are plighted
To darkness, for evening is come;
The lamp in Glebe Cottage is lighted,
The birds and the sheep-bells are dumb;
I'm alone, at my casement, for Pappy
Is summon'd to dinner at Kew;
I'm alone, my dear Fred, but I'm happy,—
I'm thinking of you.

"I wish you were here; were I duller
Than dull, you'd be dearer than dear,—
I am dress'd in your favourite colour,—
Dear Fred, how I wish you were here!
I am wearing my lazuli necklace,
The necklace you fastened askew!
Was there ever so rude or so reckless
A darling as you?

"I want you to come and pass sentence
On two or three books with a plot:
Of course you know "Janet's Repentance:"
I'm reading Sir Waverley Scott,
The story of Edgar and Lucy,—
How thrilling, romantic, and true!
The Master,—his bride was a goosey,—
Reminds me of you.

"To-day, in my ride, I've been crowning
The Beacon whose magic still lures,
For up there you discoursed about Browning,—
That stupid old Browning of yours:
His verve and his vogue are alarming,
I'm anxious to give him his due;
But, Fred, he's not nearly so charming
A poet as you.

" I have heard how you shot at the Beeches,
I saw how you rode Chanticleer,
I have read the reports of your speeches,
And echo'd the echoing cheer :
There's a whisper of hearts you are breaking,—
I envy their owners. I do!—
Small marvel that fashion is making
Her idol of you.

" Alas for the world, and its dearly
Bought triumph, and fugitive bliss ;
Sometimes I half wish I was merely
A plain or a penniless Miss :
But, perhaps, one is best with a measure
Of pelf ; and I'm not sorry, too,
That I'm pretty, because it's a pleasure,
My dearest, to you.

" Your whim is for frolic and fashion,
Your taste is for letters and art ;—
This rhyme is the common-place passion
That glows in a fond woman's heart :
Put it by in a dainty deposit
For relics,—we all have a few !
Some day, love, they'll print it, because it
Was written to you."

F. L.

ON FISHING.

A NUMBER of persons, aping Dr. Johnson, are prone to sneer at our sport upon the waters,—“a stick,” quoth they, “with a fly at one end and a fool at the other,”—and so the angler and his pastime are summarily dismissed by men who neither understand him nor his vocation. Were enemies of angling less ignorant they would be tolerant of the sport, for there is more in the art of fishing than meets the eye of a superficial observer; indeed, the mere catching of a basket of fish,—all the looker-on can see in the sport,—is perhaps the smallest part of the gratification derived from a day spent by the river-side, which an enthusiastic fisher has said is a recreation that ought only to be permitted to good men. As it is not given to every man to be an angler, neither is it given to some other men to be truthful interpreters of the pleasure and instruction that may be derived from a sport which has existed since the painted aborigines of early Britain transfixed their fish with a bone spear.

Nothing that is very new can be said about the method of angling. It is an old-fashioned art, and is still pursued after the mode that prevailed when Isaak Walton wandered, rod in hand, in the flowery meads that border the river Lea. Anglers, like poets, must be born to their vocation. Many works, and some of them excellent books, have been written on the pastime,—about it, and in praise of it,—but no book that has been written, from Walton to Francis, will make an angler. Indeed the best anglers are those who have learned to fish from necessity. Vain man may encase his body in the regulation suit of Tweeds, and expend much money on the upholstery of the art, but he will never by so doing lure the speckled trout from its home in the waters. All the books he may read will not enable him to do this. The ragged gipsy from the hillside encampment, with an extemporised rod, to which may be fastened a bit of common string, with perhaps a bent pin to hook the fish, will do far more execution than a regiment of the guys who pretend they are fishers, yet wholly fail in their endeavours to deceive the fish; but then, angling to the gipsy is a necessity of life, and at an early age he learns instinctively where to find a trout, and how to get it into his possession. As in shooting there are battues, where the birds are frightened into flocks, and grounds where the pheasants are preserved into the veriest tameness, so in many places there are stretches of protected water well filled with fish, in order that certain people may

have an opportunity to think themselves mighty fishers. But one fish, however small, ingeniously lured from that water in which it had its natural home, is worth a basketful taken from a preserve where the animals are only stored for capture. In France the fishermen of Brittany sow their sea fishery grounds with cod roes to attract the sardine to their nets, but in Scotland the sailors can take sprats in millions without a lure of any kind. Men sit in a punt on the Thames delighted if after an hour or two's work they obtain a few dace or gudgeon, the water having been previously strewed with some kind of ground bait. That, of course, is not angling any more than shooting at a battue is sport. A salmon angler sneers at such fishers in the same way that a highland deer-stalker would sneer at "le sport" of an elaborately got up Frenchman shooting the little birds that chirrup in the Bois de Boulogne.

The true angler is a man of parts; he hath virtues which are either wanting in, or at any rate are not cultivated by, other men, he is endowed with the gifts of patience, endurance, and observation; he is slow to anger, and is full of resources; he is generally a man enjoying rude health, unselfish, careless of the pleasures that delight other men, and anything but the fool depicted by Dr. Johnson and his followers. We have a few extracts about angling in our commonplace-book, redacted from the utterances of men who have been great at luring the fish from the water. One of these is to the effect that fishing is one of the most healthy recreations that men can pursue. "The motion of the rod," says this writer, "gives to the whole body, but especially to the muscles of the breast, much strength and power." We have a suspicion that it is chiefly unsuccessful anglers, men who have failed in the art, that abuse it, much in the same way as men who fail to become great actors abuse Macready. "To be a successful salmon-fisher," we are told by another disciple of Walton, "involves a large amount of patience, perseverance, and strict attention to the minutæ of the art. A deficiency in one point, though you may be proficient in all other details, will cause a nullity of the whole." Good anglers are keen critics of details, and take a pleasure in attending personally to all those little things that dandy fishers get done by deputy. Your real fisher, too, has a soul above hunger; a crust of bread, a mouthful of cheese, and a dram, are all he wants, and even this small refreshment is unwillingly partaken of, if the fish be in a "taking" mood. Never mind; his fast converts into a feast the simplest of fare, hunger affords him a fine salad, the temporary rest given to the stomach is good for the constitution, and the decided change of scene from pent city to open country is a tonic that is worth travelling four or five hundred miles to obtain:—

"Though sluggards deem it but an idle chase,
And marvel men should quit their easy chair
The toilsome way and long, long league to trace,

Oh! there is sweetness in the mountain air,
And life that bloated ease can never hope to share."

The mighty angler,—the triton among the minnows,—is undoubtedly he who tackles the great salmon of the Norwegian fiords, or the man who can run down, now and again, to the salmon rivers of Wales or Scotland; but as we cannot all be giants in the art, there must, we fancy, be fellows to represent "Patience in a punt, smiling at a perch." It is not the vocation of every man to sweep the Tay or the Severn, and now and again land a thirty-pound salmon. Great, very great indeed, is the difference between the active waters that flow amid the hills and dales of Scotland or Wales, and the sluggish and muddy streams that slowly meander through many of the flat meadows of England. They necessitate different kinds of angling, and by parity of reasoning different kinds of anglers; the fish also being different, taking on the impress of its peculiar food and habitation. But it is not meet for a member of the craft to sneer at his brethren, because they have not the chance of distinguishing themselves amid the mountains of the far north.

There are no doubt many good anglers frequenting the Thames,—men who ought not to be sneered at,—and we know that traditions are handed down among these fishers of mighty trout and other giant fishes that have been captured in that famous river; and some day the sport may be renewed,—some day, when the waters of the mighty stream are no longer polluted by the sewage of the towns near which it flows,—some day, when the salmon courses up the silent highway, and the artificially-bred trout and ombre chevalier sport in the purified waters. Then we shall see the old stuffed trout and perch of the "Angler's Arms" renewed, and have again, we sincerely hope, a race of Waltons wandering on the flowery meadows. We have fished a bit of the Thames water, and have taken an occasional pike, not to speak of abounding roach and barbel. There are fine haunts on the Thames for "the wolf of the waters," as that river pirate and cannibal the pike may be designated,—beautiful spots of deep, clear, and pellucid water, fringed with green verdure, where lies this terrible scourge of the river waiting for prey,—places that an innocent troutling or lazy perch deem all too beautiful to be inhabited by a devil. But the fiend is waiting there; and just when the trout is gambolling in fancied security, or the perch is lazily lunging at an opportune worm, the pirate dashes out of his lair and makes them prisoners. Considering that the Thames is so near St. Paul's, and so accessible to the inhabitants of a more than ordinarily populous city, it is wonderful that there are fish left in it. Most rivers that are near a city are quickly emptied of their finny population. It is wonderful indeed to find how populous with fish the Thames still is, especially in members of the carp family; in fact, the speciality of this great river, so far as anglers are concerned, is that it abounds in members of the carp

family. Perch, too, are tolerably plentiful, and jack as well, not to speak of the silver eel, and that host of minor fishes which scientific anglers only value as bait for the tritons of the scene. After all, Thames anglers are not so greedy for small fry as the *pêcheurs* who haunt the banks of the Seine about the Quay D'Auteil, to whom minnows or infantine fish of any kind are a godsend, to be quickly transferred to a frying-pan. Eels are angled for industriously in the Seine, or rather are groped for in the mud, and speedily,—having undergone that traditional preparation which we have all heard about,—figure on the tables of the neighbouring cheap restaurants stewed in claret, or otherwise prepared to tempt the appetite. We have witnessed the great rapidity with which the business of angling and cooking is carried on in the little villages on the banks of the Seine; but still, although the twin operations of capture and cooking are quick enough, they do not nearly approach the rapidity of Lord Lovat's plan. This nobleman, it is said, used at certain seasons of the year to light a fire at the brink of a salmon leap at Kilmorack, on the river Beaully; and, placing upon it a kettle, quietly wait till a fish, in its laudable endeavours to reach the shallow upper streamlets, would precipitate itself into the boiling water, and in the space of twenty minutes or so become done to a nicety. Thus he enjoyed his salmon, as he thought, in perfection. We never tasted a fish so cooked, but we have more than once partaken of the veritable Tweed kettle, prepared, as was said, from a recipe handed down from the ancient monks of Melrose, who were, if tradition may be believed, extremely fond of good living:—

“The monks of Melrose made gude kail
On Fridays when they fasted;
Nor wanted they gude beef and ale,
As lang's their neighbours' lasted.”

The pretty kettle of fish just referred to is prepared by crimping the animal the moment it is captured and killed, when, after cleaning and cutting it into slices, it is boiled in a strong pickle or brine till it be thoroughly done; and then eaten, sans cérémonie, without any other relish than a portion of the sauce in which it has been boiled. It is a mistake to serve any rich sauce with this fish; the flesh is rich enough without any foreign condiment whatever. Another modern mistake is serving salmon on a napkin; it ought to be sent to the table in a deep dish with plenty of the water in which it has been boiled. A third mistake is in eating our salmon boiling hot: let the epicure try the fish after it is cold, and whenever possible boil a whole fish. A small salmon of from six to eight pounds, boiled whole, is very fine: before it is served, scrape off the scales,—never mind the unsightliness,—and don't fail to eat the skin,—it is excellent. Were it our cue to write in this article about the cooking of fish, instead of the catching of them, we could enlarge on the subject with satisfaction

to ourselves and profit to our readers ; but as our present business is with their capture rather than their cookery, we must pass on.

Coming back, then, to our proper work, we may assume that angling, "the contemplative man's recreation," as it has been called, no longer requires a defence on the score of cruelty. It is not now thought to be more the act of a butcher to kill a trout than to slaughter that pet poetic animal, the lamb. Even the ladies have ceased to talk sentiment on the subject ; in fact, they have begun to handle the rod themselves. Every now and then we hear or read of the feats of our lady salmon-killers. Last season a lady killed a thirty-five pound fish ; it took the lady, with the aid of a stalwart keeper, two hours to get it out of the water ; and this salmon was thought to be such a beauty that it was sent to the House of Commons as a present to the Speaker, and after being much admired by the right honourable gentleman and his friends, was "ordered to lie on the table." This lady would never, of course, think of killing a lamb with her own fair hands, but it is quite certain she did not think it cruel to kill her salmon. It is quite clear that, if lamb and grouse were never eaten, neither the one nor the other would ever be killed for table purposes ; no horrid and grizzled butcher would disturb the dreams of the little lambkin, nor would the crack of the death-dealing rifle bring its doom to the pheasant or the partridge. To man has been given dominion over the fowls of the air and the denizens of the deep, from the tiny minnow which the boy hooks with a pin, to the leviathan of the frozen seas, which is shot with a harpoon fired from a mortar ; and as the fish claims dominion over the flies that sport upon the stream and the worms which frequent the water, and as it kills them as often as it can, it is not for us to draw the line and curse at some particular bait because it seems cruel to use it.

Anglers' fishes,—the salmon and trout excepted,—cannot be said to possess much, if any, economic value. No man of taste who could obtain herrings or sprats would ever purchase roach or barbel. There was a time, however, when a fish-pond was an universal appanage of every country mansion-house ; and when carp, perch, or trout, or some other well-known fish, obtained from home water-preserves, or from some stream flowing through the estate, figured on the dining-table, made palatable by expensive cookery ; and in the grounds of our old abbeys and monasteries there was invariably, in the olden time when such institutions flourished, a fish stew. The monks, it is proverbial, were fond of good living, and many a fine trout and fat carp, it is easy to believe, graced their fast-day refectations. Now country gentlemen do not require a fish-pond, because the express train whirls down a turbot or cod fish that was living and in the sea a few hours before it was deposited, daintily packed in a wicker fish creel, at their porters' lodges. To some persons the sea fish named prove a grateful change from the constant salmon, for even that fish, when too often

partaken of, is not relished ; *toujours perdrix* has become a proverb, —*toujours saumon* has been exclaimed before now, not only by country gentlemen, but by peasant boys and ploughmen, who, once upon a time, were accustomed to turn up their noses at fish food which has of late years become a dainty solely to set on rich men's tables. Long ago every hind living near a salmon water claimed the right of angling in it, and most of the class were smart fishers. It is instructive to note the change of habit among the people that has made salmon fashionable and consequently dear. We hope it will not be thought dreadfully heretical if we say, like the ploughman of old, that it would be distasteful to us to be compelled to eat salmon three times a week. Strange as fashionable folks may think it, we relish a prime haddock boiled in sea water, or a fine salt herring, far more than the venison of the waters,—just as we prefer a hind leg of a well-fed black-faced sheep to a haunch of venison. All this is no doubt dreadfully unfashionable, but it is our true taste nakedly exposed to the reader.

Another heresy of ours is, that for genuine sport,—for affording an enjoyable day's angling,—the trout is by far a better fish than the salmon. Indeed, it is the angler's fish par excellence. We know of no better reward for an industrious fisher than a dozen or two of trout ranging in weight from a few ounces to a pound and a half. A well-proportioned trout of twelve or eighteen ounces is indeed a prize for the best angler. Salmon angling is very expensive,—so expensive that it can only be enjoyed by the wealthy. It is rather annoying to be required to pay perhaps a sovereign a day for the right of angling on a stretch of salmon water, and have in addition to surrender your take of fish to the lessee of the stream who grants you permission to fish. Many gentlemen now go to Norway in order to enjoy the sport of salmon-fishing in perfection, which, however, can still be had in Scotland, where there is also excellent trout-fishing for many months in the year. In the large lakes of Scotland there are very gigantic trout ; there are especially the great trout of Loch Awe,—*salmo ferox*,—which grow to very large dimension. We have more than once helped to kill a twenty-pounder. The *salmo ferox* is found in most of the larger Scottish lochs, and is a thoroughly game fish ; it fights to the death, and, as an angling friend of ours says, scarcely knows when it is dead. It has been found more than once to free itself from the line, and then again seize the same bait with which it was taken before with greater voracity than ever. This monster of the lakes is a dreadful cannibal, preying extensively on smaller fish living in the same waters. We know well enough that an occasional fine trout has been taken out of the Thames and other English rivers,—as, for instance, the splendid fish taken near Kingston in Surrey by a banker, which weighed ten pounds, and was thirty inches long ; but as the trout is, par excellence, the angler's fish, so is Scotland, par excellence, the land of the trout. For trout angling, in all its most enjoyable

aspects, men must assuredly journey north of the Tweed. And once in "the land of brown heath and shaggy wood,"—away far from the populous city,—there is a wealth of water rich in fish, which generally speaking is free to anglers, who may, as a rule, fish for trout in any river they like; and there are hundreds of streams which a London angler would find worthy of a visit. We do not mean on the beaten paths which are now so well known to all fishers, such as the land of Tibby Shiels, or rather the water of lone St. Mary's, and the adjoining rivers and burns. Even in Scotland, distant as some of the streams are from the busy haunts of men, they have been somewhat over-fished; and although trout are not exactly scarce on some of the rivers, still that fish is not so plentiful as it used to be when, as a boy,—say thirty-five years ago,—we saw two men in the course of a forenoon fill a good-sized washing-tub with trout lured from a Dumfriesshire burn. In Scotland efforts are being made to introduce the grayling as an angler's fish, and we have had in our possession several fine specimens of considerable size taken from the Clyde, where it is now becoming rather plentiful. It may interest English anglers to know that we have in Scotland one or two peculiar fish, which must, we think, have been introduced pisciculturally like the grayling, such as the vendace, which, however, is so shy that it cannot be called an angler's fish. Quantities of this fish are taken once or twice a year by means of a net, in order that the people round about may hold a vendace feast, and have a little jollification. It is a fish that is confined only to one place, and that is the water of Lochmaben in Dumfriesshire. There is also in Scotland the far-famed and "marrowless" Loch Leven trout,—another of those mysteries of the piscine world which no fellow can understand. It is very accessible, and affords tolerable sport to the angler, who requires, however, to hire a boat to fish from. In our opinion lake fishing is not nearly so exciting as river angling; the fish have not the same scope for resistance as they have in a river or brook, where they can dart from bank to brae, and easily obtain a hiding-place; but the lake fish are of course much larger than burn trout, and Loch Leven trout are as a rule as costly, if not more so, than early salmon, and a profitable trade in these trout has existed for more than half a century. The fish of this far-famed loch, in which stands the prison-castle of Mary Stuart, are both rich in colour and fine in flavour, which is of course the result of a peculiar feeding ground. The run of Loch Leven trout at present average a pound per fish. We have seen one hundred fish weigh ninety-nine pounds. The vendace cannot for a moment be compared gastronomically with Loch Leven trout, which are delightful when plain boiled in well-salted water, or when baked in a slight paste. It is thought by some connoisseurs that Loch Leven trout have deteriorated in flavour since the lake was partially drained; but we know no difference,—their flavour to us is as delightful as it was thirty years ago.

It is surprising that steps have not been taken long ago to augment the supplies of these trout. Artificial breeding has, we know, been talked about; and a suite of ponds, as a trout nursery, might be easily constructed on the banks of Queich. The powan of Loch Lomond is rarely taken by the angler, like the vendace. It is not an angler's fish, but is worth capturing as a curiosity. There is no lack of fishes in that Queen of Lochs; indeed, the angler may consider himself in clover when he reaches this district of Scotland, for he is near all the best kinds of fishing with which the country abounds,—from minnow to salmon.

Scotland has been metaphorically called the Land o' Cakes,—it might as well have been called the Land of Fish. It is a country abounding in lochs and streams, mountain burns, hillside rivulets, and gigantic waters like the Tay. Scotland too, may be described as the trout fisher's Dorado,—that fish being the stock in trade of its lochs and rivers. It is useless, however, to expect good fishing in the neighbourhood of towns and cities; but is there not the railway or the steamboat to carry away the anglers to far-off solitudes, where nature, with all her pristine charms, is ready to fascinate the visitor? The land of the mountain and the flood, the land of Walter Scott, the land of cakes, the home of the salmon and the trout,—what can the traveller or the angler desire more?

“ Their groves of green myrtle let foreign lands reckon,
Where bright beaming summers exalt the perfume;
Far dearer to me yon long glen of green breckan,
With the burn stealing under the long yellow broom!”

Scotland, as all northern anglers are aware, yields a very large share of the salmon which are brought every year to the London market. Very few of these commercial fish, however, are procured by angling, most of them being captured in a wholesale way by means of the net and cobble; but a goodly number of salmon are still caught by the rod, especially at the beginning and the end of the season. There are one or two Scottish societies of socially inclined fishers that rent a cottage and a stretch of water on the Tweed, to which they can proceed during the season in order to enjoy a day or two's angling, and there are other fishing clubs besides. We, however, prefer Tay as an angling stream, and consider its salmon superior to those of Tweed, and the former river has the advantage of not being infested by the bull trout, a fish which has already exterminated the salmon of some rivers, and is now playing havoc in Tweed. Anglers coming from England purely for fishing purposes, should at once get away north,—or south, if they prefer that route. Let the Thames fisher who is desirous of seeing sport in the far north put himself at St. Katherine's Wharf on board the Dundee steamboat. Arrived at Dundee, let him then go on to Perth, and as he is there at any rate, he should not forget to visit the salmon nursery at Stormont-

field, which is interesting both in a scientific and commercial aspect; firstly, because it has largely aided in the solution of several important problems in the natural and economic history of the salmon, which need not be detailed here, and secondly, because the operations carried on at these ponds have demonstrated that the cultivation of salmon on a fixed plan is worthy of commercial support because it pays. But what our angler is recommended to do is to get away at once to what may be called the angling districts of the Tay and its tributaries. True, at Stormontfield, or about Scone Palace, he may see Peter Marshall, the nurse of the young salmon, "Peter of the pools," "coaching" a brace of new beginners in a cobble, on an active part of the water. See how deftly Peter zigzags too and fro across the rapid stream, telling his pupils how to comport themselves, anon changing a fly, than taking a leetle pull at the youngest gentleman's flask of very still Glenlivet. Many a salmon has Peter helped out of the water. As we look and listen there comes a double flop on the stream, and we obtain just for an instant a brief glimpse of an immense salmon,—that is to say, it looks immense, for we can see no definite boundaries to it, as it dashes into the water. Peter tells the novice, who looks frightened and is shaky, to give it plenty of line, and the fish rushes off with dreadful rapidity, Peter rapidly directing what is to be done next. The line seems more than once in danger of snapping, as the fish darts from side to side of the water, dashing at one time clean out of the river, and getting pulled back by the awkwardness of the angler. Peter manages the boat with great skill, so as to humour the fish to the top of its bent. After a game fight, lasting over half an hour, a very nice eighteen-pound fish is lifted clean out of the water with a landing net, and Peter, wiping his brow, takes a pull at the flask with much relish, and exclaims, "Hech, sirs, but we've got her at last!" There is some free salmon angling on the Tay, which at times yields a few fish; and in the neighbourhood of Perth and Dunkeld there are plenty of accessible trout streams where one may angle all the live long day, and no one will ask, what doest thou?

As has been already hinted, salmon angling is desperate hard work; men have been known before now to hook a fish, play it for two hours, and then lose it! A well-known Scottish editor got so excited in playing a fish that he jumped into the water nearly up to the neck, and drowned a leading article for his journal, which happened to be in the pocket of his breeches! but he secured his salmon. We prefer, as we have said, the gentler exercise of trout fishing, and whilst friends have fought a day on the Tay for the venison of the waters, and gone home very tired and unrewarded, we have filled our basket with prime trout from the Shochie or the Isla. Laying aside our own tastes and prejudices, and looking upon the salmon as being the monarch of anglers' fishes, a brief sketch of the economy of a salmon

stream may not prove uninteresting to fishers, or, at any rate, to those that like to read about fish. It is not long since grave apprehensions were entertained that salmon would be altogether extirpated from our rivers. Most of the large English streams were without fish of any kind,—even the mud-loving eel had been poisoned by the numerous impurities that manufactories have introduced into our rivers. The rental of the Tweed had fallen to a fourth of what it was at one time, the Tay was being ruined by stake nets, and the Solway by overfishing, and the fish that were left in those rivers that had not been polluted by an overflow of chemicals, were gradually becoming smaller, and, of course, lighter; the heavy ones being speedily captured, and the young ones not allowed time to attain a great size. The quick modes of carriage that came into use, the facilities afforded by railroads for reaching the larger seats of population, as well as the high price obtained for salmon from the dealers of London and elsewhere, served, and still serves, indeed, to spur the tenants of the fisheries into the greatest activity, inducing them not to allow a single fish to reach the spawning grounds in the upper waters,—where they would be most accessible to some anglers,—if they can possibly prevent it from ascending. Many years ago, when there was only a local demand both for salmon and sea fish, the idea of a failure of the supplies was never for a moment entertained either by proprietors or fishers; the fish were then plentiful enough to be “dirt cheap,”—a penny a pound weight being the common price in the neighbourhood of nearly every salmon stream. It was at one time attempted to carry salmon from Scotland to London alive in welled vessels, but as the fish killed themselves attempting to escape, that plan had to be given up as impracticable; the moment it was ascertained, however, that salmon could be carried to great distances if packed in ice, and be found in tolerably good condition at the end of the journey, the price rose to such a figure as put an end for ever to the grievance of those farm servants and apprentices who were determined not to eat that fish oftener than twice a week.

The enormous fecundity of fishes,—some of them yield their eggs in millions, and most of them in tens of thousands,—has given anglers and others the idea that it is impossible to affect the supplies by any amount of fishing. The female salmon yields eggs at the rate of one thousand for every pound of her weight. A fish of twenty pounds, as a general rule, yields twenty thousand eggs. As regards the productiveness of a salmon river, the question to be solved is, not how many eggs the fish produce, but how many eggs arrive at the stage of table fish, or, in other words, grow to be salmon of say twenty pounds weight. Well, we have the authority of Sir Humphrey Davy for saying that out of the 17,000 ova which each female salmon on an average annually deposits, only 800 in ordinary circumstances come to perfection. Some fishery economists do not allow that such

a large number ever grow to be table fish, and perhaps Sir Humphrey did not mean that the number specified by him became table fish, but merely that they were hatched into life. One writer on this part of the salmon question thinks that only one per cent. of the eggs emitted by the mother fish attain to the point of perpetuating their kind. The destruction of eggs and young fish must therefore be enormous. Large quantities of the eggs, it is known, never come in contact with the milt, and so they perish. Countless numbers of the ova are carried away by the floods into unsuitable places, and they too perish. Then, again, numerous fish-cannibals are waiting at the spawning-beds to feast on the appetising roe; the thousands so eaten cannot be calculated, but so they perish. The young fish, again, are always in danger; and although a river may be positively swarming with young salmon, comparatively speaking, only very few of them ever live to reach the salt-water; all kinds of fresh-water monsters are constantly extorting tribute from the shoal. The smolt slaughter which occurs when the juvenile army reaches the sea is awful. Hordes of large sea-fish are always in waiting in the estuaries at the period of migration, instinctively aware of the feast that is in store for them. That only a very small percentage of the young salmon which go down to the sea as smolts ever return as grilse is obvious. Yet that large quantities of grilse are still left is also obvious from the fact that tens of thousands of these fish are annually killed; indeed, the fishery-lessee is the greatest enemy of the young salmon. It has been shown very conclusively that grilse are young salmon that have not spawned. Then why kill them? It is surely the worst possible economy to kill these virgin fish before they have at least one opportunity of perpetuating their kind. If we were to kill all our lambs, for instance, where should we obtain our mutton? As a well-known angler has said in speaking of the salmon-fisheries, "The conduct of salmon-proprietors is as rational as high-farming with the help of tile-drains, liquid-manure, and steam-power would be for the purpose of eating corn in the blade."

Were it possible for some of our anglers who have a turn for arithmetic to take the census of any large salmon river, it would be found that by far the largest proportion of the fish were very young, not perhaps over four years old. Anglers have read of the enormous salmon of former days, the sixty and seventy-pounders that figure in various works of natural history, but we seldom see such fish now—forty-pounders are even very scarce. The great bulk of the salmon now taken are under twenty pound weight. The demand is so great that time cannot be allowed for growth. In fact, in this high-pressure age, nothing is allowed to grow old. If we want old wine, it has to be manufactured expressly for us, and as for getting a morsel of old cheese, our grocer says it is hopeless.

A river, however large, can only feed and breed a given quantity

of salmon. As anglers well know, when fish are very plentiful in a stream, they are often lean and poor in flavour. The fish population of such a river as the Tweed must be very large. Indeed, we know that it is, or at least has been, for, in the quinquennial period between 1841 and 1845, as many as 18,000 salmon, 81,000 grilse, and 69,000 bull trout were taken from it; and it would not be too much to say, that as many were left behind as were taken—not counting either parr or grilse. Two of the most essential elements of a first-rate salmon or trout water are breeding-ground for the old fish and feeding-ground for the young ones. Without good spawning places, the destruction of ova will be vastly greater than has been indicated, and without good feeding-ground the fish won't thrive. The condition of the proprietors of head-waters has been much improved by recent legislation. They deserved a great deal of sympathy; they had at one time to give their share of the river almost, as one might say, gratis, to the lower proprietors, as a nursery for their benefit. They were deprived of their sport of angling, because the few fish that were allowed to ascend the waters were not in a state to afford the angler any satisfaction. It was a hard case for the upper water and tributary stream men, that they could receive no consideration for the valuable privilege they afforded to the owners of the commercial fisheries on the lower waters, except a few baggit fish. Full justice will never be done to the upper proprietors till some new plan of working our salmon rivers be hit upon. Were each river worked as if it belonged to one man,—like the Spey,—were the workings of salmon rivers, in fact, made co-operative instead of competitive, there would be a greater chance of justice being done to all the proprietors.

It will be good news for all anglers to learn that pisciculture is extending itself. Messrs. Martin and Gillone, of Tongland, the lessees of the Dee salmon-fisheries in Kirkeudbrightshire,—where, by-the-bye, there is excellent salmon or trout angling at a moderate fee,—have carried it on successfully and on a considerable scale for some years; and in Galway, Mr. Ashworth, since he began the plan of artificial rearing, has increased the produce of his fisheries tenfold. We are instructed by an eminent salmon-farmer, who is too modest to allow us to give his name, that in considering the effect of any practical amount of artificial propagation as compared with the natural process adopted by the parent salmon itself, it is requisite to estimate, firstly, the quantity of ova that a given number of fish annually caught in any river may have deposited in the previous year; and, secondly, the number of years required to produce an average stock of fish varying in weight from six to thirty pounds each. It is rather difficult to fix the average weight of fish caught in various rivers, but the annual number killed may be taken to be, in some salmon rivers, twenty thousand fish. Experience enables us to

arrive at the conclusion that it requires four years to produce marketable fish—from the egg—of the average weight of seven pounds each. The twenty thousand fish annually caught may vary in size from six to thirty pounds, then again, in spite of the general rule referred to, various fish produce different numbers of ova. A fish of twenty pounds weight has been found to contain nearly twenty-seven thousand eggs, whilst another weighing fourteen pounds would only yield seven thousand eggs. Taking large and small together, it may be assumed that twenty thousand fish had visited their breeding-ground the previous year, and that one-half were females that produced seven thousand eggs each, in other words, that seventy millions of eggs had been left in the rivers annually, and had produced one marketable fish to every three thousand five hundred eggs. This large quantity of seventy millions of fish eggs annually deposited in a river whose produce of marketable salmon only amounts to twenty thousand fish, appears to be a very extraordinary estimate, and leads one to ask what becomes of the surplus?

The Stormontfield breeding boxes and ponds have now been greatly enlarged, so that the proprietors will be able to have an annual breeding, and thus pour into the Tay every year four or five hundred thousand fish! The primary conditions of salmon life, living, space, and spawning ground, are,—as all who have angled on that river will testify,—to be found in perfection in the Tay. Mr. Ramsbottom, the pisciculturist, says of this river that it is one of the finest breeding streams in the world, and that it would be presumption to limit the number of salmon that might be raised in it were the river cultivated to its capabilities. The main stream has a very large volume of water, and having many tributaries, there is such ample breeding-ground and such an abundance of fish, that if the wonder-working Stormontfield boxes were to throw an annual million of salmon into the river there would still be room enough for all. This is of importance, because a river will only hold a certain population. The sea has ample food for all the salmon kind that visit its deep waters, and as the fish return to the river fat in flesh and rich in flavour, it is not difficult to guess that the food they obtain is rich in quality and abundant in quantity. It is not likely, either, that the food which the ocean affords to the fish will vary much in its quality, but it is well known that the food supplied by some rivers is much less nourishing than that of other waters. The young fish of one river grow fast and have a fine flavour, whilst those of another river are slow of growth and are lean and comparatively flavourless. In one river a fish of a particular age will weigh nine pounds, but a fish of the same age in a different stream will be a pound or two lighter. Even in the same stream, fish of the same age will at different stages of their growth be found to weigh very differently. Anglers ought to note such facts as these with more exactitude than they generally do.

Were the proprietors of the Severn to enter into pisciculture, say to have a suite of boxes and ponds capable of turning into the main water a million of smolts per annum, and were they to co-operate so as to have only one or perhaps two fishing stations instead of fifty, they would undoubtedly solve the grand problem of how best to conduct a salmon fishery on a large scale. They would, of course, have to guard more and more against the pollution of the stream and its tributaries. The salmon is a dainty animal, and cannot exist except in the cleanest waters. The filthy Clyde has no salmon, neither has the Thames. Other rivers, as many of our anglers are aware, have become depopulated of salmon, and still more of them are likely to suffer from want of fish, unless they become purged of the filth that is allowed to flow into them. This is a consequence of the rapid rise of manufactories on the banks of waters which were at one time strictly pastoral streams. The question of river pollution is intimately associated with the occupation of the angler. The home of the fish should be pure, and living fish in a stream is the best test of its purity. The future of angling is so bound up in the purification of our waters that we claim permission to illustrate this part of our subject without waiting for the report of the Commissioners who have been appointed to take evidence on the state of our rivers. Alas! our streams are not now what they were a quarter of a century ago; some of them are but highways for the passage of all kinds of filth, dead dogs and cats,—putrid and smelling,—chemical wash, and the abounding liquid refuse of towns, by some uneconomic maladroitness sent to the river that ought to have been kept bright and pellucid, in order to supply the inhabitants with water! In giving evidence before the Commissioners now inquiring into the state of our rivers, the Mayor of Wakefield told how in his young days he had seen the river Calder full of roach and perch, and now not a fish can live in it, nor did his honour think that the water of that river could be made fit to drink by any chemical process whatever. The proprietary of a stream would have also to look after the poachers; for poaching, which was at one time purely a recreation, when the men in the neighbourhood of a salmon river only killed fish for their personal wants, is now a business, and a loathsome business too, seeing that the trade is chiefly in foul fish. The killing of spawning fish used to be,—it is happily a diminishing practice,—a great cause of hurt to the fisheries. Were the proprietors of any given river to co-operate, there is no doubt but that they could make that river an enormously profitable speculation. What is to hinder a body of anglers from leasing a stream and cultivating it as a salmon farm? They could so regulate the take of fish as to keep out of the market when there was likely to be a glut, and, by employing one or two servants of their own, they could obtain the profit made by the usual twenty or thirty lessees; they could also regulate and greatly extend their close

time, so that an abundant number of fish would be enabled to reach the spawning grounds, which would still further enhance the value of the property. "Routine," as Dr. Esdaile says, "is as fatal to fish as to men, and so torpifies the understanding that self-interest even is insufficient to stimulate to take a simple step in advance in a new direction." The river Spey may be cited as an example of what can be done by good management. It has been told in Parliament, by the Duke of Richmond in person, that the profits of that river, which is mostly his own, were over twelve thousand pounds per annum. To put the case in a stronger way, or as Mr. Russell puts it in his work on "The Salmon," "the weight of salmon produced by the Spey is equal to the weight of mutton annually yielded to the butcher by each of several of the smaller counties of Scotland." And the value of a salmon farm is still greater than that of a mutton farm, because there is no cost price of stock to put down, no food to purchase. As Benjamin Franklin has it, fishes are "bits of silver pulled out of the water." Common fishes may be represented by silver, but the salmon must be represented by good red gold. In the spring time of the year a twenty-five pound salmon on a Bond Street counter may be estimated at seven pounds ten shillings sterling. To conclude this part of our subject, we say that the Spey being providently managed as the property of one man, although it yields a greatly less number of fish than the Tweed, is far more profitable; and while the Tweed at one time was fished till the middle of October, the Spey closed in August, thus affording a long rest to the breeding fish, and ensuring the success of future seasons.

The reader may think that we are too partial to Scotland, with its lordly salmon and sport-yielding trout, and that we ought not to slight Wales, which some anglers describe as a perfect paradise. We have never fished there, but believe there is really as fine sport to be obtained in the principality, as there is in Cumberland and Westmoreland, where the lakes teem with trout and char. Men who visit these places during their few weeks of yearly holiday, and enjoy the sport they afford in temperance, may for a time "throw physic to the dogs." All we say is, that for real angling the sportsman must leave behind him the baited waters of the Thames, and the dace and chub which have hitherto made him happy, and take to the hills and dales of Scotland and Wales, and the capture of the trout and the salmon. Of course each angler has his own peculiar tastes, his likes and dislikes, both as to the rivers in which he prefers to fish, and the kinds of fish he prefers to take. We prefer an angling competition on Lochleven, but many will prefer "the Hoxton Derby." One man thinks any fish but the salmon below his notice; another man will prefer to angle in the broads of Norfolk, whilst many an enthusiastic fisher has to be contented with an hour or two's permissive sport on the ornamental water of the London parks. Exclusives, again, hie themselves away

to the fiords of Norway. In fact, anglers are being driven abroad because of the foul state of many of our own rivers.

Whilst the polluted rivers are being purified, and arrangements are being made to throw on to the hungry land that debris of the numerous mills and manufacture which would so enrich the soil, why should not men angle in the sea? We have over and over again tried sea-fishing as a sport and can pronounce it excellent. We have speared mullet in the basin of Arcachon, we have caught single herrings in the bay of Wick, we have killed saithe in the Clyde, we have handled a smelt net on the coast of Holland, we have taken mackerel in Largo Bay, we have "howked" for eels in the broads of Norfolk, have netted whitebait below Woolwich, caged lobsters at the Orkney Islands, "trotted" for whelks everywhere, dug sand eels from the banks of Fisherrow, dredged for oysters at the Pandores, caught sea trout at Lamash, handled gobies at Joppa, seen a shoal of pilchards landed in the south of England, participated in the cod fishing at the Well-bank, taken parr wholesale out of the Isla, at the Brig o' Riven, and viewed a whale-hunt in the Frith of Forth! Therefore, we can vouch that sea-fishing has in it all the elements of sport,—and it will yet become fashionable! Does not the Duke of Argyll occasionally relieve the tedium of his intellectual pursuits by going out to the Loch Fyne herring fishery, and do we not know a noble Marquis who brings in his fish in the herring season, and sells his "take" on the quay at Dunbar? The angling apparatus required by sea-anglers too, is of the simplest kind, and is generally provided by those who have boats for hire in the villages of the coast. There are places on the English sea-board where this kind of sport may be pursued with the greatest possible success, and after a thoroughly economic manner. It is no joke to play a thirty-pound cod fish, and a large conger eel will try the powers of the most stalwart man we know. Crab fishing among the rocks is good sport, and the spearing of flat fish is not altogether devoid of excitement. Many a pleasant hour might be spent on the glancing waters of the sea in search of the minor monsters of the deep.

In penning the foregoing remarks we have not attempted to dogmatize or dictate in the matter of angling. Nor have we ventured to deal in the slang of the art, or to impart instruction to the novice. As we have hinted, angling cannot be effectively learned from a book. Practice is the one thing needful. A student would learn more from a day passed with Francis, Stewart, or Russell, than he can ever hope to learn from the books of these gentlemen, good as they are. Angling, as all the world knows or should know, was one of the chief recreations of Christopher North. He has described his work on the rivers with the enthusiasm of a keen fisher, but he says,—and we believe him,—that he never learned the art from books. In fact, the very best anglers cannot write. We knew a great angler living on the

banks of Till who could not sign his name ; yet he knew more about fish and fishing than all the writing anglers of the age. Persons about to angle for the first time should get a practised friend to "coach" them, and they should commence in a quiet and humble way, and they can begin on any "bit" of water that is within reach. They need not invest in an expensive salmon rod till they have been a few years at the business ! Try the worm to begin with. The art of fly fishing will come in good time. New modes of angling are difficult to find out. There are experts who, every year, invent and manufacture new flies, many of them being very unlike anything ever seen in nature. But after all that can be said or done, what the angler desires is a load of fish. Indeed, the crave for fish with some men is so insatiable that they are not too particular as to how they take them. Let them but fill their baskets, never mind the *modus operandi*. Other anglers, again, will treat with contempt all modes of fishing but fly fishing. Worm fishing to some is contemptible. Such *cognoscenti* are great in rods and tackle ; they have the slang of the art at the end of their tongue ever ready for use ; but we like the quiet fisher best. He is more deadly at the business, and, as has been already hinted, the gipsy will beat most of our anglers in obtaining fish, and that too with the humblest kind of apparatus. Angling can at least be praised for this,—that, like fox-hunting, it is a purely recreative sport. It can never become, except to a very few, a business or trade ; neither can it ever become a business for betting on, such as is horse-racing. We cannot charge our recollection with ever having seen as much as one shilling change hands on a bet about fishing.

Some anglers hold that their year does not commence till May,—that they cannot fish till they find the May fly upon the water ; while others, more determined for sport, are on the river side early in April, and keen salmon fishers will have a pull at the monarch of the brook in February. Again, there are enthusiasts who will be at work before the end of January. These are like the gouty man in the well-known engraving. They would angle in a tub in their dining-room rather than not fish ! Men who never obtain their annual holidays till August or September, or who do not live near a river, do not obtain the full pleasure of the angler, however fond they may be of the sport. The country, to our mind, is more beautiful in May than at any other season of the year ; the leaves are greener, the water is more crystalline, the birds chirrup more cheerfully on the trees, and the fish, after a stormy winter, "feed" with greater willingness than at the fall of the year. Happy is the angler who is able to pursue his vocation during the balmy springtime, when the surrounding scenery is surpassing in its beauty, and fresh from the easel of the sublimest of all painters—Nature.

BRITISH RULE IN INDIA.

BRITISH rule in India has been placed upon its trial. A few pregnant words that fell from the thoughtful lips of Lord Cranborne have led to an official inquiry into the comparative advantages and disadvantages of British supremacy in that vast dependency of the English Crown. At first sight the question may seem to be important rather from a sentimental than from a practical point of view, and to belong rather to the province of speculative essayists than to that of governors and statesmen. To certain minds, too, it will appear a foregone conclusion that a Government founded on the just, liberal, and enlightened principles which characterise British domination in every quarter of the globe, must necessarily be preferable to the tyranny, caprice, and extortion of Asiatic despotism. A very little consideration, however, will show that there is a good deal to be said on the other side; that the drawbacks to an administration by foreigners are many and grievous; that our European civilisation harmonises but ill with Eastern traditions, usages, habits, modes of thought, feeling, and action.

In the first place, it is well to bear in mind the various steps by which the conquest of India was accomplished. English people generally speak of our Indian Empire as if it had sprung up like Jonah's gourd, or been built by genii, in a single night. They forget that it was the work of a century—that exactly one hundred years intervened between the Sepoy War and the Battle of Plassey—that the valour of our troops and the intrigues of our statesmen would have failed to achieve such a mighty consummation, had the native princes laid aside for a time their mutual jealousies, and made common cause against the common enemy. The story of our Indian conquests is, in many parts, little more than an illustration of the old fable of the horse that called in the aid of man to enable him to overcome the stag. Our allies not unfrequently suffered at our hands quite as much as our enemies. Subsidiary alliances paved the way to ultimate absorption or annexation, and the supplicant of yesterday became the pensioner of the morrow. The advance from Fort William to Peshawur was not the onward rush of a mighty wave, which sweeps away every barrier, levels the high places, fills up the hollows, and leaves a flat, monotonous waste, whereon to build palaces and plant gardens. It was rather the slow, stealthy, tortuous movement of the serpent, that seeks to avoid obstacles and shuns all hostile encounter,

and only flies at its opponent under the influence of fear and in self-defence. The country and the people remain but slightly changed from what they were a hundred years ago, when the provinces of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa passed into the hands of the British. The improvements we have so zealously, so conscientiously, yet so injudiciously laboured to introduce, lie all upon the surface, and have taken no root, for seed and soil were alike unsuited to each other. The very thinnest veneer has been laid over the native teak—so thin that it warps, and cracks, and splinters if taken into every-day use.

When first the English traders ventured to depart from their strictly mercantile character, and to assume that of territorial proprietors, India was broken up into numerous rival states, each hoping to overcome its neighbour by the help of the foreign adventurers, potent in arms and skilled in warfare. The Mogul still nominally wielded the paramount power, but his satraps rendered him scant homage and obedience, and were more intent upon their own schemes of personal aggrandisement than careful to uphold the majesty of the Mongol dynasty. Oudh was governed by a Nawab-Wuzeer, as ready to wage war upon his sovereign as to do him service in the field. The fertile provinces of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa were administered by another Mohammedan viceroy, who soon became a mere puppet in the hands of the English. The Deccan was ruled in kingly style by the Nizam, who made treaties with whom he pleased, and broke them when it suited him. His neighbour was the Mohammedan upstart, Hyder Ali, who had usurped the government of the Hindoo State of Mysore. Yet more powerful and independent than these Moslem princes were the great leaders of the Mahratta Confederacy, the Peishwah, Scindiah, Holkar, and the Rajah of Nagpore. The Rajpoot chiefs were sovereign princes, each in his own principality. The Sikhs were a name of power far away in the north-west. Cashmere and Nepaul were lands of poetry and romance. Sindh, so far as the English were concerned, was scarce even a geographical expression. Mohammedan or Mahratta, Sikh or Hindoo, every race alike was ever ready to make war upon each other. The baronial feuds of England or of France in the middle ages were there reproduced on a gigantic scale. The highest prizes in the lottery of human life were to be won by boldness or by wile. The first of the Gaekwars was a herdsman, the ancestor of Scindiah carried the slippers of the Peishwah, Holkar rose from the Sudra caste, Hyder Ali was a trooper, and somewhat of a freebooter. There was little security for life or limb, and still less for property. Wealth had its pleasures and its privileges, but it also invited pillage, and was often the prelude to torture and a violent death. The peasants were little thought of, though at times a lordly proprietor would distribute largesses with lavish hand, in celebration of a wedding or the birth of an heir; and upon the whole their material condition was probably

not inferior to that of English labourers of the same period. Warriors and priests were naturally the most favoured classes, as pandering to the passions, the power, the superstitions, and the vanity of rulers and adventurers. But amid all these elements of confusion and strife, that mysterious link was recognised which unites all the peoples of a country as by a blood relationship. The old enmity between the conquered Hindoos and their Mohammedan masters had greatly abated. The former had risen to posts of honour and emolument, especially in the financial department, while the latter had in many ways assimilated themselves with their subjects, notably in the matter of caste. Nor was there any wide difference in manners and social usages. The same patriarchal familiarity of address existed among the followers of the Arabian lawgiver and the worshippers of Brahma or of Buddha. Neither the one nor the other was troubled with a "mission." They cared not for proselytes, they vexed not each other with tentative and piecemeal legislation, they bestowed not a thought upon the intellectual or spiritual amelioration of the masses. And yet they founded schools and colleges, they constructed observatories, they erected temples and mosques of surpassing grandeur and loveliness, they brought water to thirsty lands, and, so far as we know, charged nothing for irrigation: the Government was a father, not an usurer. The lot of the inhabitants was rudely chequered with good and evil, but hope was ever at hand to gild the dark hues of adversity. The husbandman whose hut was burnt down, whose yoke-oxen were driven off, whose small store of grain was rifled or destroyed, consoled himself with the thought that his turn might come on the morrow, and that, as Holkar had been as poor and humble as himself, he might yet be as great and powerful as Holkar. There was compensation on all sides. There was some oppression, but there was much enjoyment. Justice might be uncertain, but was never tardy. The police might not be always vigilant, but neither were they always vexatious. India, in short, belonged to the Indians.

By skilfully availing themselves of the mutual jealousies and dissensions of the native princes, Clive, Warren Hastings, and the Marquis Wellesley, laid, broad and deep, the foundations of the Anglo-Indian empire; while their successors, by open war or covert wile, gradually built up the towering and stately edifice, not less the object of envy to Continental nations, than of pride to Englishmen. Were mankind moved more by reason than by passion and sentiment, the people of India could not do otherwise than rejoice at the change from an unstable, vicarious, and capricious mode of government, to a system that holds prince and peasant as equal before the law, that affords impartial protection to person and property, that maintains peace, and fosters plenty throughout the length and breadth of the land. Men, however, are neither mere

machines nor seraphim. They cling to old associations, to the customs of their forefathers, to the prejudices of youth, to ancient tradition—whether religious, political, or social—and, above all, to national independence. It may be true that nationality, as we understand the word, did not exist in the pre-English era—at least, it was inapplicable to India as a whole, though each fragment had a nationality of its own. Thus, the Mahrattas were, so to speak, a nation; the Sikhs likewise; the Rajpoots, most decidedly; the Mysoreans, the Bengalees, the people of Oudh, were all distinct nations. It is the British Government that has effaced these distinctions, and bestowed a certain homogeneity upon the most heterogeneous agglomeration of peoples on the face of the globe, not even excepting the Austrian Empire. This process of fusion will, no doubt, prove ultimately in the highest degree beneficial to the various populations of India, though fraught with the elements of extreme peril to the permanence of British supremacy. For the rest, the question accidentally mooted by Lord Cranborne, and so heartily taken up by Sir John Lawrence, is by no means one of recent suggestion. From the earliest days of British rule grave doubts have been entertained and expressed by those best qualified to form a correct opinion, as to the personal contentment and happiness of the people under their new masters. In a letter to the Secret Committee of the Board of Directors, dated Fort St. George, April 22, 1799, Lord Mornington, in reporting the discovery of the plot at Benares to restore Wuzeer Ali to the viceroyalty of Oudh, to favour Zeman Shah's project of invasion, and to expel the English from India, remarks:—

"You will observe that the persons concerned in this treason are almost exclusively Mohammedans, and several of them of high rank. It is a radical imperfection in the constitution of our establishments in India, that no system appears to have been adopted with a view either to conciliate the good-will, or to control the disaffection, of this description of our subjects, whom we found in possession of the Government, and whom we have excluded from all share of emolument, honour, and authority, without providing any adequate corrective of those passions incident to the loss of dignity, wealth, and power."

Not more favourable was Lord William Bentinck's opinion of the policy pursued by the British:—

"In many respects," he said, "the Mohammedans surpassed our rule; they settled in the countries which they conquered; the interests and sympathies of the conquerors and conquered became identified. Our policy, on the contrary, has been the reverse of this—cold, selfish, and unfeeling: the iron hand of power on the one side, monopoly and exclusion on the other."

This cold reserve, this want of sympathy, is at the bottom of our unpopularity in Europe as well as in India. We pride ourselves something overmuch on not carrying our hearts upon our sleeves; by so

doing we may escape, indeed, the pecking of the daws, but we also lose the billing of the doves. The benefits conferred upon the peoples of India have been destitute of all graciousness in the manner of their bestowal. We have given lordly gifts, but with a lordly air of haughty superiority. We bear ourselves towards the natives as if they were children or semi-barbarians, notwithstanding the monuments of an advanced, if peculiar, civilisation which meet us at every turn. We do not even trouble ourselves to consider whether the boons we bestow are suited to the recipients. We make no allowance for difference of ideas, of early training, of hereditary feelings and prejudices, and then complain of ingratitude because our favours are sometimes received as insults, and our blessings as if they were curses. This over-haste to reform the natives of India according to our own model, was denounced well-nigh half a century ago by Sir John Malcolm, than whom few men have ever enjoyed a more familiar acquaintance with the people of that country.

"We may lay it down as a first principle," he writes, in his work on Central India, "that no system can be good that is not thoroughly understood and appreciated by those for whose benefit it is intended. The minds of men can never be tranquillised, much less attached, until they are at repose regarding the intentions of the authority under which they live, which they never can be till all classes see and comprehend its principles of government. If our system is in advance of the community, if it is founded on principles they do not comprehend, and has forms and usages adverse to their habits and feelings, we shall experience no adequate return of confidence and allegiance. To secure these results we must associate ourselves with our subjects. . . . We are not called upon to lower ourselves to their standard, but we must descend so far from the real or supposed eminence on which we stand as to induce them to accompany us in the work of improvement. Great and beneficial alterations in society, to be complete, must be produced within the society itself; they cannot be the mere fabrication of its superiors, or of a few who deem themselves enlightened."

Unhappily, the natives of India, even at this day, fail to understand the disinterestedness of our motives in labouring to place them on a par with European nations in practical knowledge and material well-being. Do what we will, say what we will, every innovation is suspected to be a mine driven under their ancient religion. The sole object and purpose of the British Government, as they steadfastly believe, is to make Christians of them all; that is, to defile and render them impure on earth, and to deprive them of all hope of bliss hereafter. Nor is it surprising that they should be disquieted in their minds when they contemplate the incessant alterations that are introduced into every department of the Government. There is nothing permanent, nothing complete. The legislative results of one season are rendered null and void by the amendments of the ensuing one. There is a perpetual making and repealing of laws and regulations. One year the natives are assured that such a measure is passed for their present and lasting benefit, and the very next year it is cancelled to

make way for a fresh experiment. This danger, too, was foreseen by Sir John Malcolm.

"I consider," he writes in his "Instructions," "and the opinion is the result of both experience and reflection, that all dangers to our power in India are alight in comparison with those which are likely to ensue from our too zealous efforts to change the condition of its inhabitants, with whom we are yet, in my opinion, but very imperfectly acquainted. A person who entertains such sentiments as I do on this question, must appear the advocate of very slow reforms; but, if I am so, it is from a full conviction that anything like precipitation in our endeavours at improvement is likely to terminate in casting back those we desire to advance; on the contrary, if, instead of overmarching, we are content to go along with this immense population, and to be in good temper with their prejudices, their religion, and usages, we must gradually win them to better ways of thinking and of acting. The latter process, no doubt, must be one of great time; but its success will be retarded by every hasty step."

A more shrewd observer, and certainly a greater statesman, than Sir John Malcolm, equally deplored the combined ignorance and precipitancy manifested in the feverish, spasmodic, impulsive system of legislation pursued by the British Government. In a minute "On the State of the Country and the Condition of the People," dated Dec. 31, 1824, Sir Thomas Munro made the following remarks:—

"We proceed in a country of which we know nothing as if we knew everything, and as if everything must be done now, and nothing could be done hereafter. We feel our ignorance of Indian revenue and the difficulties arising from it; and, instead of seeking to remedy it by acquiring more knowledge, we endeavour to get rid of the difficulty by precipitately making permanent settlements, which relieve us from the troublesome task of minute or accurate investigation, and which are better adapted to perpetuate our ignorance than to protect the people."

What follows is still more pertinent to the object of this paper:—

"Though we cannot eradicate corruption, we may so far restrain it as to prevent it from causing any serious injury to the public interest. We must, for this purpose, adopt the same means as are usually found most efficacious in other countries; we must treat the natives with courtesy, we must place confidence in them, we must render their official situations respectable, and raise them in some degree beyond temptation, by making their official allowances adequate to the support of their station in society. With what grace can we talk of our paternal government if we exclude them from every important office, and say, as we did till very lately, that in a country containing fifteen millions of inhabitants no man but a European shall be entrusted with so much authority as to order the punishment of a single stroke of a rattan. Such an interdiction is to pass a sentence of degradation on a whole people, for which no benefit can ever compensate. There is no instance in the world of so humiliating a sentence having ever been passed upon any nation. The weak and mistaken humanity which is the motive of it, can never be viewed by the nation as any just excuse for the disgrace inflicted on them by being pronounced to be unworthy of trust in deciding on the petty offences of their countrymen. . . . Our books alone will do little or nothing: dry, simple literature will never improve the character of a nation. To produce this effect, it must open the road to wealth, and honour, and public employment. Without the prospect of such reward, no attainments in science will ever raise the character of a people. . . . The ruling vice of our

Government is innovation, and its innovation has been so little guided by a knowledge of the people, that, though made after what was thought by us to be mature discussion, it must appear to them as little better than the result of mere caprice. . . . One of the greatest disadvantages of our Government in India is its tendency to lower or destroy the higher ranks of society, to bring them all too much to one level, and, by depriving them of their former weight and influence, to render them less useful instruments in the internal administration of the country."

Thus, clearly and succinctly, did Sir Thomas Munro indicate the weak points in our armour, and point out the only remedy. If in the case of the European officials it had been twice judged expedient to raise their salaries to place them above temptation, it was surely not less necessary in like manner to strengthen the probity of native magistrates educated in a less severe code of public honour and private morality. Instead of this, the allowances of natives in the Government service were calculated on the lowest scale, and barely sufficed for subsistence. In Sullivan's "*Remarks on the Affairs of India*," it is stated that in the year 1852 there were in the Madras Presidency upwards of 200 European officials whose salaries ranged from £300 to £6,000 a year, and some twenty natives drawing from £5 to £800 per annum. In Bengal, out of a population of nearly forty millions, there were only 105 natives whose salaries amounted to £360 a year, while there were 321 Europeans whose incomes varied from £600 to £6,000. It implies, however, an entire misapprehension of the Oriental temperament and character to suppose that a native official is content with a salary upon which a European would starve. His table expenses, indeed, may be small, but the proper maintenance of his dignity in the eyes of his neighbours demands a large expenditure upon "pomp and circumstance." Money he must have, by fair means or foul, and, knowing this, it is unjust and unreasonable to place him in the way of temptation without the safeguards that are deemed requisite in the case of a European, and then to expect stainless impeccability. Bishop Heber, an upright and charitable man, saw and admitted the hardship of the situation.

"Much evil," observed the worthy prelate, "arises in India from the insufficient manner in which the subaltern native servants of Government are paid. In the case of the town duties, a toll-keeper, through whose hands the dues of half a district pass, receives as his own share three rupees a month! For this he has to keep a regular account, to stop every boat or hackery, to search them in order to prevent smuggling, and to bear the abuse and curses of all his neighbours. What better could be expected from such a man but that he should cheat both sides, withholding from his employers a large portion of the sums which he receives, and extracting from the poor country people, in the shape of presents, surcharges, expedition and connivance money, a far greater sum than he is legally entitled to demand?"

Sir Charles Metcalfe, a very high authority on Indian matters, was of opinion that native agency should be more extensively employed,

that the natives should receive full credit for the work that was really done by them, instead of the merit being ascribed to their European superiors, while only failures were assigned to themselves. The system then, and still pursued, was characterised by that clear-headed statesman as "deplorable," and the real cause both of "the inefficiency of the European and the corruption of the native."

"The main evil of our system," we read in a memorandum from the fluent pen of Sir Thomas Munro, "is the degraded state in which we hold the natives. We suppose them to be superstitious, ignorant, prone to falsehood, and corrupt. In our well-meaning zeal for their welfare we shudder at the idea of committing to men so depraved any share in the administration of their own country. We never consider that their superstition has little or no influence on their public conduct; that individuals, and even whole nations, the most superstitious and credulous in supernatural concerns, may be as wary and sceptical in the affairs of the world as any philosopher can desire. We exclude them from every situation of trust and emolument; we confine them to the lowest offices, with scarcely a bare subsistence; and even these are left in their hands from necessity, because Europeans are utterly incapable of filling them. We treat them as an inferior race of beings. Men who, under a native Government, might have held the first dignities of the State, who, but for us, might have been governors of provinces, are regarded as little better than menial servants, are often no better paid, and scarcely permitted to sit in our presence. We reduce them to this abject state, and then we look down upon them with disdain, as men unworthy of high station. Under most of the Mohammedan princes of India the Hindoos were eligible to all the civil offices of Government, and they frequently possessed a more important share in them than their conquerors."

This matter of "sitting in our presence" may possibly appear a small grievance in the eyes of practical, prosaic Englishmen, but it wears a very different aspect in the eyes of a sensitive, punctilious people, brooding over wrongs far other than imaginary, and habitually subjected to slights at the hands of beardless boys and vulgar-minded seniors of an alien race. The Government, aware how little they could confide in the natural courtesy and true gentlemanly feeling of their European officers, formally recognised the right of native commissioned officers to sit in the presence of their brothers-in-arms of the dominant race. And yet this simple grace is so frequently evaded, that Bishop Heber notices the fact in his "Journal," and remarks that "men of old families are kept out of their former situation by this and similar slights; and all the natives endeavour to indemnify themselves for these omissions on our part by many little pieces of rudeness, of which I have heard Europeans complain as daily increasing among them." In this respect the old French adventurers in the North-West Provinces acted with far greater propriety. The "easy and friendly intercourse in which they lived with natives of rank" was favourably remembered long after their downfall, and contrasted with the boorish reserve and supercilious demeanour of their English successors. The French were spoken of in Bishop Heber's time as "often oppressive and ava-

ricious, but as of more conciliating and popular manners than the English sahibs. Many of them, indeed, had completely adopted the Indian dress and customs, and most of them were free from that exclusive and intolerant spirit which makes the English, wherever they go, a caste by themselves, disliking and disliked by all their neighbours." "We are not guilty," the good bishop goes on to say, "of injustice or wilful oppression; but we shut out the natives from our society, and a bullying, insolent manner is continually assumed in speaking to them." In truth, insults are far less easy to forgive than injuries. At the same time, no one would desire to see our countrymen in India lay aside the costume of their race, or adopt the customs and ideas of the people among whom their lot is temporarily thrown. The position of the French adventurers was very different. They were there not by right of conquest, but by sufferance; they were not masters, but mercenaries; and, as such, were unburdened by any higher responsibility than that of rendering faithful service to their employers. It may be fairly doubted if the natives of India would be the gainers by the exchange of French for British rule. Sir Thomas Munro, indeed, questioned the superior advantage to the natives of being subject even to the latter, in preference to remaining under their own princes.

"The strength of the British Government," he observes, in that nervous English of which he was, perhaps, an unconscious master, "enables it to put down every rebellion, to repel every foreign invasion, and to give to its subjects a degree of protection which those of no native Power enjoy. Its laws and institutions also afford them a security against domestic oppression unknown in those States. But these advantages are dearly bought. They are purchased by the sacrifice of independence, of national character, and of whatever renders a people respectable. The natives of the British provinces may, without fear, pursue their different occupations, as traders, *meerassidars*, or husbandmen, and enjoy the fruits of their labour in tranquillity; but none of them can aspire to anything beyond this mere animal state of thriving in peace. . . . There is, perhaps, no example of any conquest in which the natives have been so completely excluded from all share of the government of their country as in British India. Among all the disorders of the native States, the field is open for every man to raise himself; and hence among them there is a spirit of emulation, of restless enterprise, and independence, far preferable to the servility of our Indian subjects. The existence of independent native States is also useful in drawing off the turbulent and disaffected among our native troops."

In the course of the half-century that has elapsed since the above remarks were made, momentous changes have been effected by the right of conquest, and by the "Right of Lapse." Sattara and Nagpore have been absorbed, Oudh has been annexed, the Punjab conquered, Sindh seized by a robber's hand, Mysore appropriated. Some of the Rajpoot and Cis-Sutlej States are, indeed, nominally independent, as are also the territories of Scindiah, Holkar, and the Gaekwar; but none of these any longer afford a field for enterprise, or an opening for genius and valour. The sphere of employment,

indeed, within the British provinces, has been greatly enlarged since the days of Lord Hastings and Sir Thomas Munro, though the door is still closed against native military talent. The bar, the bench, the revenue and magisterial departments, the Legislative Council itself, are now all accessible to natives. A native has been received within the covenanted, and once exclusive, branch of the Civil Service, and is consequently eligible for the highest offices of the State. The government of a province, more extensive than great Britain, may one day be entrusted to him. And yet no native may hope in the military service to attain the virtual rank, responsibility, and authority of an English ensign. Every encouragement is given to the pursuits of commerce; book-learning is sure of honours and emolument; plagiarism, and a slavish imitation of European ideas and sentiments, are certain to achieve higher reward than real merit or originality; but for men of action there is no career whatever. Men of large views, of a noble ambition, of talents and character that raise them above their fellows, are condemned to fret and fume, and waste their lives in ignoble sloth or more ignoble sensuality. Instead of conciliating these leading spirits, instead of interesting them in the durability of our empire, instead of making them the very bulwarks of our power, we keep them in obscurity, we treat them with contumely, we convert them into our bitterest enemies. No tall poppy may hope to thrive and raise its head on high in our Indian garden. Not even the so-called Independent States are permitted to encourage freedom of thought and boldness of action. The British Government undertakes to protect the rulers of these States against all comers, against all enemies from within or from without, and thus perpetuates, as formerly in Oudh, tyranny, exaction, and gross debauchery, until an opportunity occurs of availing itself of the state of things produced or maintained through its intervention, as an excuse for dethroning the prince and declaring the forfeiture of his country and people. The inevitable consequence of this jealous, ungenerous system of government is, as Sir Charles Metcalfe never wearied of reiterating, that we have no root in the country, and are entirely dependent on our military superiority. And that superiority has now to be demonstrated by the actual presence of an overwhelming force of European breach-loaders and Armstrong guns. It will no longer suffice to trust to prestige. "Our greatest danger," Sir Charles Metcalfe observed in 1833, "is not from a Russian invasion, but from the fading of the impression of our invincibility from the minds of the natives of India. . . . We have ceased to be the wonder that we were to the natives; the charm that once encompassed us has been dissolved, and our subjects have had time to inquire why they have been subdued." They have also acquired a more definite knowledge of our power and resources. "I am not alarmed at what I see of the force and resources of the

Company, but at what is unseen," said Hyder Ali; but that vague, shadowy, mysterious impression of remote and apparently inexhaustible power has been gradually effaced by a more exact acquaintance with prosaic facts. The natives are beginning to perceive that however strong may be our internal means of defence, our aggressive power is no longer so formidable as it used to be; not so much from any diminution of material strength as from the growth of Parliamentary influence and the adoption of a higher standard of international honour and morality. They have also come to understand that much of our ancient success was owing to their own dissensions and intrigues. On this point there is nothing to be added to the following extract from Sir John Malcolm's "Instructions," which sums up the whole question in a few comprehensive sentences:—

"The want of union of the natives appears one of the strongest foundations of our power; it has certainly contributed, beyond all others, to its establishment. But when we trace this cause, we find it to have originated in the condition in which we found India and the line we adopted towards its inhabitants. That it will continue to operate when the condition of that country is changed, and under any alteration in our course of proceedings, is more than can be assumed. The similarity of the situation of the great proportion of the people of this continent, now subject to our rule, will assuredly make them more accessible to common motives of action, which is the foundation of all union; and the absence of that necessity for conciliation which times have effected will make us more likely to forget its importance. Our power has hitherto owed much to a contrast with misrule and oppression; but this strength we are daily losing. We have also been indebted to an indefinite impression of our resources, originating in ignorance of their real extent: knowledge will bring this feeling to a reduced standard. We are supported by the good opinion of the lower and middling classes, to whom our Government is indulgent; but it has received the rudest shocks from an impression that our system of rule is at variance with the permanent continuance of rank, authority, and distinction in any native of India. This belief, which is not without foundation, is general to every class, and its action leaves but an anxious and feverish existence to all who enjoy station and high name; the feeling which their condition excites, exposes those who have any portion of power and independence to the arts of the discontented, the turbulent, and the ambitious; this is a danger to our power which must increase in the ratio of its extent, unless we can counteract its operation by a commensurate improvement of our administration."

Much may depend upon the ultimate success of the great experiment that is now being made in Oudh. Should the advantages of administering the country through the agency of the native aristocracy be proved by actual experience to be as incontestable as they appear to be to many of the more thoughtful and impartial Anglo-Indians, there can be no valid reason for withholding the boon from the other provinces subject to British sway. By commingling more freely and frankly with natives of rank and influence, the English magistrates and rulers will work far more effectually towards raising the moral tone of society than any number of schoolmasters and professors by expounding *Rasselas* or proposing Sir Roger de

Coverley as the type of a high-minded Zemindar. That the germs of future power, wealth, and happiness are being prepared for the natives of India by the species of ordeal through which they are passing, can hardly be denied. The development of the spirit of nationality is, perhaps, the most beneficial as well as the most magnanimous means of securing to the people of India, after the termination of the British supremacy, whatever advantages they are supposed to be enjoying while under it. It is only too certain, that were the British troops to evacuate the peninsula within the life of the present generation, their departure would be the signal for wars and commotions from the mountains of Afghanistan to the Bay of Bengal, from Mount Everest to Rama's Bridge. Before the last soldier was embarked, the Sikhs would be over the border on their march to Delhi; Holkar and Scindiah would be grappling for the Mahratta mastery; the Nizam's Arabs and Rohillas would be scouring the rich table land of Mysore,—everywhere bloodshed, devastation, and misery. But, if ever Hindoo and Mohammedan, Sikh, Bengalee, Rajpoot, and Mahratta could be brought to sink their mutual feuds and jealousies in an aspiration for one common fatherland, if they could be taught the advantages of union, of one general interest, one commonwealth, our mission would then have been fulfilled; and in restoring India to herself we should earn the respect of our contemporaries, the admiration of posterity, and the grateful attachment of the people we had elevated to the dignity of a nation. But there is much to be done before that grand consummation be attained. There is much to be done, and much to be left undone. We must cease to vex and harass the natives by our ceaseless manufacture of Acts and Regulations. We must learn to let well alone. We must think more of opening up the country, of constructing roads, canals of navigation and irrigation, tanks and aqueducts, of diffusing a practical knowledge of science as applied to mechanics, of imparting the elements of social and political economy, of teaching the universal brotherhood of mankind. On the other hand, we may repose from our missionary labours, we may relinquish the hopeless task of engrafting European ideas upon an Asiatic stock, we may forbear to force upon our Eastern fellow-subjects a civilisation unsuited to their nature, and which, even in our own land, is the privilege of the few. To conclude, in the words of Sir John Malcolm, "let us calmly proceed in a course of gradual improvement; and when our rule ceases, for cease it must (though probably at a remote period), as the natural consequence of our success in the diffusion of knowledge, we shall, as a nation, have the proud boast that we have preferred the civilisation to the continued subjection of India. When our power is gone, our name will be revered; for we shall leave a moral monument more noble and imperishable than the hand of man ever constructed."

PHINEAS FINN, THE IRISH MEMBER.

CHAPTER XXXI.

FINN FOR LOUGHTON.

By three o'clock in the day after the little accident which was told in the last chapter, all the world knew that Mr. Kennedy, the new Cabinet Minister, had been garrotted, or half garrotted, and that that child of fortune, Phineas Finn, had dropped upon the scene out of heaven at the exact moment of time, had taken the two garroters prisoners, and saved the Cabinet Minister's neck and valuables,—if not his life. "Bedad," said Laurence Fitzgibbon, when he came to hear this, "that fellow 'll marry an heiress, and be Secretary for Oireland yet." A good deal was said about it to Phineas at the clubs, but a word or two that was said to him by Violet Effingham was worth all the rest. "Why, what a Paladin you are! But you succour men in distress instead of maidens." "That's my bad luck," said Phineas. "The other will come no doubt in time," Violet replied; "and then you'll get your reward." He knew that such words from a girl mean nothing,—especially from such a girl as Violet Effingham; but nevertheless they were very pleasant to him.

"Of course you will come to us at Loughlinter when Parliament is up?" Lady Laura said the same day.

"I don't know really. You see I must go over to Ireland about my re-election."

"What has that to do with it? You are only making out excuses. We go down on the first of July, and the English elections won't begin till the middle of the month. It will be August before the men of Loughshane are ready for you."

"To tell you the truth, Lady Laura," said Phineas, "I doubt whether the men of Loughshane,—or rather the man of Loughshane, will have anything more to say to me."

"What man do you mean?"

"Lord Tulla. He was in a passion with his brother before, and I got the advantage of it. Since that he has paid his brother's debts for the fifteenth time, and of course is ready to fight any battle for the forgiven prodigal. Things are not as they were, and my father tells me that he thinks I shall be beaten."

"That is bad news."

"It is what I have a right to expect."

Every word of information that had come to Phineas about Lough-

shane since Mr. Mildmay had decided upon a dissolution, had gone towards making him feel at first that there was great doubt as to his re-election, and at last that there was almost a certainty against him. And as these tidings reached him they made him very unhappy. Since he had been in Parliament he had very frequently regretted that he had left the shades of the Inns of Court for the glare of Westminster; and he had more than once made up his mind that he would desert the glare and return to the shade. But now, when the moment came in which such desertion seemed to be compulsory on him, when there would be no longer a choice, the seat in Parliament was dearer to him than ever. If he had gone of his own free will,—so he told himself,—there would have been something of nobility in such going. Mr. Low would have respected him, and even Mrs. Low might have taken him back to the friendship of her severe bosom. But he would go back now as a cur with his tail between his legs,—kicked out, as it were, from Parliament. Returning to Lincoln's Inn soiled with failure, having accomplished nothing, having broken down on the only occasion on which he had dared to show himself on his legs, not having opened a single useful book during the two years in which he had sat in Parliament, burdened with Laurence Fitzgibbon's debt, and not quite free from debt of his own, how could he start himself in any way by which he might even hope to win success? He must, he told himself, give up all thought of practising in London and betake himself to Dublin. He could not dare to face his friends in London as a young briefless barrister.

On this evening, the evening subsequent to that on which Mr. Kennedy had been attacked, the House was sitting in Committee of Ways and Means, and there came on a discussion as to a certain vote for the army. It had been known that there would be such discussion; and Mr. Monk having heard from Phineas a word or two now and again about the potted peas, had recommended him to be ready with a few remarks if he wished to support the Government in the matter of that vote. Phineas did so wish, having learned quite enough in the committee-room up-stairs to make him believe that a large importation of the potted peas from Holstein would not be for the advantage of the army or navy,—or for that of the country at large. Mr. Monk had made his suggestion without the slightest allusion to the former failure,—just as though Phineas were a practised speaker accustomed to be on his legs three or four times a week. "If I find a chance, I will," said Phineas, taking the advice just as it was given.

Soon after prayers, a word was said in the House as to the ill-fortune which had befallen the new Cabinet Minister. Mr. Daubeny had asked Mr. Mildmay whether violent hands had not been laid in the dead of night on the sacred throat,—the throat that should have been sacred,—of the new Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster; and had expressed regret that the Ministry,—which was, he feared,

in other respects somewhat infirm,—should now have been further weakened by this injury to that new bulwark with which it had endeavoured to support itself. The Prime Minister, answering his old rival in the same strain, said that the calamity might have been very severe, both to the country and to the Cabinet; but that fortunately for the community at large, a gallant young member of that House,—and he was proud to say a supporter of the Government,—had appeared upon the spot at the nick of time;—"As a god out of a machine," said Mr. Daubeney, interrupting him;—"By no means as a god out of a machine," continued Mr. Mildmay, "but as a real help in a very real trouble, and succeeded not only in saving my right honourable friend, the Chancellor of the Duchy, but in arresting the two malefactors who attempted to rob him in the street." Then there was a cry of "name;" and Mr. Mildmay of course named the member for Loughshane. It so happened that Phineas was not in the House, but he heard it all when he came down to attend the Committee of Ways and Means.

Then came on the discussion about provisions in the army, the subject beeing mooted by one of Mr. Turnbull's close allies. The gentleman on the other side of the House who had moved for the Potted Peas Committee, was silent on the occasion, having felt that the result of that committee had not been exactly what he had expected. The evidence respecting such of the Holstein potted peas as had been used in this country was not very favourable to them. But, nevertheless, the rebound from that committee,—the very fact that such a committee had been made to sit,—gave ground for a hostile attack. To attack is so easy, when a complete refutation barely suffices to save the Minister attacked,—does not suffice to save him from future dim memories of something having been wrong,—and brings down no disgrace whatsoever on the promoter of the false charge. The promoter of the false charge simply expresses his gratification at finding that he had been misled by erroneous information. It is not customary for him to express gratification at the fact, that out of all the mud which he has thrown, some will probably stick! Phineas, when the time came, did get on his legs, and spoke perhaps two or three dozen words. The doing so seemed to come to him quite naturally. He had thought very little about it beforehand,—having resolved not to think of it. And indeed the occasion was one of no great importance. The Speaker was not in the chair, and the House was thin, and he intended to make no speech,—merely to say something which he had to say. Till he had finished he hardly remembered that he was doing that, in attempting to do which he had before failed so egregiously. It was not till he sat down that he began to ask himself whether the scene was swimming before his eyes as it had done on former occasions;—as it had done even when he had so much as thought of making a speech. Now he was

astonished at the easiness of the thing, and as he left the House told himself that he had overcome the difficulty just when the victory could be of no avail to him. Had he been more eager, more constant in his purpose, he might at any rate have shown the world that he was fit for the place which he had presumed to take before he was cast out of it.

On the next morning he received a letter from his father. Dr. Finn had seen Lord Tulla, having been sent for to relieve his lordship in a fit of the gout, and had been informed by the Earl that he meant to fight the borough to the last man ;—had he said to the last shilling he would have spoken with perhaps more accuracy. “ You see, doctor, your son has had it for two years, as you may say for nothing, and I think he ought to give way. He can’t expect that he’s to go on there as though it were his own.” And then his lordship, upon whom this touch of the gout had come somewhat sharply, expressed himself with considerable animation. The old doctor behaved with much spirit. “ I told the Earl,” he said, “ that I could not undertake to say what you might do ; but that as you had come forward at first with my sanction, I could not withdraw it now. He asked me if I should support you with money ; I said that I should to a moderate extent. ‘ By G——,’ said the Earl, ‘ a moderate extent will go a very little way, I can tell you.’ Since that he has had Duggen with him ; so, I suppose, I shall not see him any more. You can do as you please now ; but, from what I hear, I fear you will have no chance.” Then with much bitterness of spirit Phineas resolved that he would not interfere with Lord Tulla at Loughshane. He would go at once to the Reform Club and explain his reasons to Barrington Erle and others there who would be interested.

But he first went to Grosvenor Place. Here he was shown up into Mr. Kennedy’s room. Mr. Kennedy was up and seated in an arm-chair by an open window looking over into the Queen’s garden ; but he was in his dressing-gown, and was to be regarded as an invalid. And indeed as he could not turn his neck, or thought that he could not do so, he was not very fit to go out about his work. Let us hope that the affairs of the Duchy of Lancaster did not suffer materially by his absence. We may take it for granted that with a man so sedulous as to all his duties there was no arrear of work when the accident took place. He put out his hand to Phineas, and said some word in a whisper,—some word or two among which Phineas caught the sound of “ potted peas,”—and then continued to look out of the window. There are men who are utterly prostrated by any bodily ailment, and it seemed that Mr. Kennedy was one of them. Phineas, who was full of his own bad news, had intended to tell his sad story at once. But he perceived that the neck of the Chancellor of the Duchy was too stiff to allow of his taking any interest in external matters, and so he refrained. “ What does the doctor say about it ? ”

said Phineas, perceiving that just for the present there could be only one possible subject for remark. Mr. Kennedy was beginning to describe in a long whisper what the doctor did think about it, when Lady Laura came into the room.

Of course they began at first to talk about Mr. Kennedy. It would not have been kind to him not to have done so. And Lady Laura made much of the injury, as it behoves a wife to do in such circumstances for the sake both of the sufferer and of the hero. She declared her conviction that had Phineas been a moment later her husband's neck would have been irredeemably broken.

"I don't think they ever do kill the people," said Phineas. "At any rate they don't mean to do so."

"I thought they did," said Lady Laura.

"I fancy not," said Phineas, eager in the cause of truth.

"I think this man was very clumsy," whispered Mr. Kennedy.

"Perhaps he was a beginner," said Phineas, "and that may make a difference. If so, I'm afraid we have interfered with his education."

Then, by degrees, the conversation got away to other things, and Lady Laura asked him after Loughshane. "I've made up my mind to give it up," said he, smiling as he spoke.

"I was afraid there was but a bad chance," said Lady Laura, smiling also.

"My father has behaved so well!" said Phineas. "He has written to say he'll find the money, if I determine to contest the borough. I mean to write to him by to-night's post to decline the offer. I have no right to spend the money, and I shouldn't succeed if I did spend it. Of course it makes me a little down in the mouth." And then he smiled again.

"I've got a plan of my own," said Lady Laura.

"What plan?"

"Or rather it isn't mine, but papa's. Old Mr. Standish is going to give up Loughton, and papa wants you to come and try your luck there."

"Lady Laura!"

"It isn't quite a certainty, you know, but I suppose it's as near a certainty as anything left." And this came from a strong Radical Reformer!

"Lady Laura, I couldn't accept such a favour from your father." Then Mr. Kennedy nodded his head very slightly and whispered, "Yes, yes." "I couldn't think of it," said Phineas Finn. "I have no right to such a favour."

"That is a matter entirely for papa's consideration," said Lady Laura, with an affectation of solemnity in her voice. "I think it has always been felt that any politician may accept such an offer as that when it is made to him, but that no politician should ask for it."

My father feels that he has to do the best he can with his influence in the borough, and therefore he comes to you."

"It isn't that," said Phineas, somewhat rudely.

"Of course private feelings have their weight," said Lady Laura. "It is not probable that papa would have gone to a perfect stranger. And perhaps, Mr. Finn, I may own that Mr. Kennedy and I would both be very sorry that you should not be in the House, and that that feeling on our part has had some weight with my father."

"Of course you'll stand?" whispered Mr. Kennedy, still looking straight out of the window, as though the slightest attempt to turn his neck would be fraught with danger to himself and the Duchy.

"Papa has desired me to ask you to call upon him," said Lady Laura. "I don't suppose there is very much to be said, as each of you know so well the other's way of thinking. But you had better see him to-day or to-morrow."

Of course Phineas was persuaded before he left Mr. Kennedy's room. Indeed, when he came to think of it, there appeared to him to be no valid reason why he should not sit for Loughton. The favour was of a kind that had prevailed from time out of mind in England, between the most respectable of the great land magnates, and young rising liberal politicians. Burke, Fox, and Canning had all been placed in Parliament by similar influence. Of course he, Phineas Finn, desired earnestly,—longed in his very heart of hearts,—to extinguish all such Parliamentary influence, to root out for ever the last vestige of close borough nominations; but while the thing remained it was better that the thing should contribute to the liberal than to the conservative strength of the House,—and if to the liberal, how was this to be achieved but by the acceptance of such influence by some liberal candidate? And if it were right that it should be accepted by any liberal candidate,—then, why not by him? The logic of this argument seemed to him to be perfect. He felt something like a sting of reproach as he told himself that in truth this great offer was made to him, not on account of the excellence of his politics, but because he had been instrumental in saving Lord Brentford's son-in-law from the violence of garrotters. But he crushed these qualms of conscience as being over-scrupulous, and, as he told himself, not practical. You must take the world as you find it, with a struggle to be something more honest than those around you. Phineas, as he preached to himself this sermon, declared to himself that they who attempted more than this flew too high in the clouds to be of service to men and women upon earth.

As he did not see Lord Brentford that day he postponed writing to his father for twenty-four hours. On the following morning he found the Earl at home in Portman Square, having first discussed the matter fully with Lord Chiltern. "Do not scruple about me," said Lord Chiltern; "you are quite welcome to the borough for me."

"But if I did not stand, would you do so? There are so many reasons which ought to induce you to accept a seat in Parliament!"

"Whether that be true or not, Phineas, I shall not accept my father's interest at Loughton, unless it be offered to me in a way in which it never will be offered. You know me well enough to be sure that I shall not change my mind. Nor will he. And, therefore, you may go down to Loughton with a pure conscience as far as I am concerned."

Phineas had his interview with the Earl, and in ten minutes everything was settled. On his way to Portman Square there had come across his mind the idea of a grand effort of friendship. What if he could persuade the father so to conduct himself towards his son, that the son should consent to be member for the borough? And he did say a word or two to this effect, setting forth that Lord Chiltern would condescend to become a legislator, if only his father would condescend to acknowledge his son's fitness for such work without any comments on the son's past life. But the Earl simply waived the subject away with his hand. He could be as obstinate as his son. Lady Laura had been the Mercury between them on this subject, and Lady Laura had failed. He would not now consent to employ another Mercury. Very little,—hardly a word indeed,—was said between the Earl and Phineas about politics. Phineas was to be the Saulsby candidate at Loughton for the next election, and was to come to Saulsby with the Kennedys from Loughlinter,—either with the Kennedys or somewhat in advance of them. "I do not say that there will be no opposition," said the Earl, "but I expect none." He was very courteous,—nay, he was kind, feeling doubtless that his family owed a great debt of gratitude to the young man with whom he was conversing; but, nevertheless, there was not absent on his part a touch of that high condescension which, perhaps, might be thought to become the Earl, the Cabinet Minister, and the great borough patron. Phineas, who was sensitive, felt this and winced. He had never quite liked Lord Brentford, and could not bring himself to do so now in spite of the kindness which the Earl was showing him.

But he was very happy when he sat down to write to his father from the club. His father had told him that the money should be forthcoming for the election at Loughshane, if he resolved to stand, but that the chance of success would be very slight,—indeed that, in his opinion, there would be no chance of success. Nevertheless, his father had evidently believed, when writing, that Phineas would not abandon his seat without a useless and an expensive contest. He now thanked his father with many expressions of gratitude,—declared his conviction that his father was right about Lord Tulla, and then, in the most modest language that he could use, went on to say that he had found another borough open to him in England. He was going to stand for Loughton, with the assistance of Lord Brentford,

and thought that the election would probably not cost him above a couple of hundred pounds at the outside. Then he wrote a very pretty note to Lord Tulla, thanking him for his former kindness, and telling the Irish Earl that it was not his intention to interfere with the borough of Loughshane at the next election.

A few days after this Phineas was very much surprised at a visit that was made to him at his lodgings. Mr. Clarkson, after that scene in the lobby of the House, called again in Great Marlborough Street, —and was admitted. "You had better let him sit in your armchair for half an hour or so," Fitzgibbon had said; and Phineas almost believed that it would be better. The man was a terrible nuisance to him, and he was beginning to think that he had better undertake to pay the debt by degrees. It was, he knew, quite on the cards that Mr. Clarkson should have him arrested while at Saulsby. Since that scene in the lobby Mr. Clarkson had been with him twice, and there had been a preliminary conversation as to real payment. Mr. Clarkson wanted a hundred pounds down, and another bill for two hundred and twenty at three months' date. "Think of my time and trouble in coming here," Mr. Clarkson had urged when Phineas had objected to these terms. "Think of my time and trouble, and do be punctual, Mr. Finn." Phineas had offered him ten pounds a quarter, the payments to be marked on the back of the bill, a tender which Mr. Clarkson had not seemed to regard as strong evidence of punctuality. He had not been angry, but had simply expressed his intention of calling again,—giving Phineas to understand that business would probably take him to the west of Ireland in the autumn. If only business might not take him down either to Loughlinter or to Saulsby! But the strange visitor who came to Phineas in the midst of these troubles put an end to them all.

The strange visitor was Miss Aspasia Fitzgibbon. "You'll be very much surprised at my coming to your chambers, no doubt," she said, as she sat down in the chair which Phineas placed for her. Phineas could only say that he was very proud to be so highly honoured, and that he hoped she was well. "Pretty well, I thank you. I have just come about a little business, Mr. Finn, and I hope you'll excuse me."

"I'm quite sure that there is no need for excuses," said Phineas.

"Laurence, when he hears about it, will say that I've been an impertinent old fool; but I never care for what Laurence says, either this way or that. I've been to that Mr. Clarkson, Mr. Finn, and I've paid him the money."

"No!" said Phineas.

"But I have, Mr. Finn. I happened to hear what occurred that night at the door of the House of Commons."

"Who told you, Miss Fitzgibbon?"

"Never mind who told me. I heard it. I knew before that you had been foolish enough to help Laurence about money, and so I put

two and two together. It isn't the first time I have had to do with Mr. Clarkson. So I sent to him, and I've bought the bill. There it is." And Miss Fitzgibbon produced the document which bore the name of Phineas Finn across the front of it.

"And did you pay him two hundred and fifty pounds for it?"

"Not quite. I had a very hard tussle, and got it at last for two hundred and twenty pounds."

"And did you do it yourself?"

"All myself. If I had employed a lawyer I should have had to pay two hundred and forty pounds and five pounds for costs. And now, Mr. Finn, I hope you won't have any more money engagements with my brother Laurence." Phineas said that he thought he might promise that he would have no more. "Because, if you do, I shan't interfere. If Laurence began to find that he could get money out of me in that way, there would be no end to it. Mr. Clarkson would very soon be spending his spare time in my drawing-room. Good-bye, Mr. Finn. If Laurence says anything, just tell him that he'd better come to me." Then Phineas was left looking at the bill. It was certainly a great relief to him,—that he should be thus secured from the domiciliary visits of Mr. Clarkson; a great relief to him to be assured that Mr. Clarkson would not find him out down at Loughton; but, nevertheless, he had to suffer a pang of shame as he felt that Miss Fitzgibbon had become acquainted with his poverty and had found herself obliged to satisfy his pecuniary liabilities.

CHAPTER XXXII.

LADY LAURA KENNEDY'S HEADACHE.

PHINEAS went down to Loughlinter early in July, taking Loughton in his way. He stayed there one night at the inn, and was introduced to sundry influential inhabitants of the borough by Mr. Grating, the ironmonger, who was known by those who knew Loughton to be a very strong supporter of the Earl's interest. Mr. Grating and about half a dozen others of the tradesmen of the town came to the inn, and met Phineas in the parlour. He told them he was a good sound Liberal and a supporter of Mr. Mildmay's Government, of which their neighbour the Earl was so conspicuous an ornament. This was almost all that was said about the Earl out loud; but each individual man of Loughton then present took an opportunity during the meeting of whispering into Mr. Finn's ear a word or two to show that he also was admitted to the secret councils of the borough,—that he too could see the inside of the arrangement. "Of course we must support the Earl," one said. "Never mind what you hear about a Tory candidate, Mr. Finn," whispered a second; "the Earl can do what he

pleases here." And it seemed to Phineas that it was thought by them all to be rather a fine thing to be thus held in the hand by an English nobleman. Phineas could not but reflect much upon this as he lay in his bed at the Loughton inn. The great political question on which the political world was engrossed up in London was the enfranchisement of Englishmen,—of Englishmen down to the rank of artisans and labourers ;—and yet when he found himself in contact with individual Englishmen, with men even very much above the artisan and the labourer, he found that they rather liked being bound hand and foot, and being kept as tools in the political pocket of a rich man. Every one of those Loughton tradesmen was proud of his own personal subjection to the Earl !

From Loughton he went to Loughlinter, having promised to be back in the borough for the election. Mr. Grating would propose him, and he was to be seconded by Mr. Shortribs, the butcher and grazier. Mention had been made of a Conservative candidate, and Mr. Shortribs had seemed to think that a good stand-up fight upon English principles, with a clear understanding, of course, that victory should prevail on the liberal side, would be a good thing for the borough. But the Earl's man of business saw Phineas on the morning of his departure, and told him not to regard Mr. Shortribs. "They'd all like it," said the man of business ; "and I daresay they'll have enough of it when this Reform Bill is passed ; but at present no one will be fool enough to come and spend his money here. We have them all in hand too well for that, Mr. Finn !"

He found the great house at Loughlinter nearly empty. Mr. Kennedy's mother was there, and Lord Brentford was there, and Lord Brentford's private secretary and Mr. Kennedy's private secretary. At present that was the entire party. Lady Baldock was expected there, with her daughter and Violet Effingham ; but, as well as Phineas could learn, they would not be at Loughlinter until after he had left it. There had come up lately a rumour that there would be an autumn session,—that the Houses would sit through October and a part of November, in order that Mr. Mildmay might try the feeling of the new Parliament. If this were to be so, Phineas had resolved that, in the event of his election at Loughton, he would not return to Ireland till after this autumn session should be over. He gave an account to the Earl, in the presence of the Earl's son-in-law, of what had taken place at Loughton, and the Earl expressed himself as satisfied. It was manifestly a great satisfaction to Lord Brentford that he should still have a borough in his pocket, and the more so because there were so very few noblemen left who had such property belonging to them. He was very careful in his speech, never saying in so many words that the privilege of returning a member was his own ; but his meaning was not the less clear.

Those were dreary days at Loughlinter. There was fishing,—if

Phineas chose to fish ; and he was told that he could shoot a deer if he was minded to go out alone. But it seemed as though it were the intention of the host that his guests should spend their time profitably. Mr. Kennedy himself was shut up with books and papers all the morning, and always took up a book after dinner. The Earl also would read a little,—and then would sleep a good deal. Old Mrs. Kennedy slept also, and Lady Laura looked as though she would like to sleep if it were not that her husband's eye was upon her. As it was, she administered tea, Mr. Kennedy not liking the practice of having it handed round by a servant when none were there but members of the family circle, and she read novels. Phineas got hold of a stiff bit of reading for himself, and tried to utilise his time. He took Alison in hand and worked his way gallantly through a couple of volumes. But even he, more than once or twice, found himself on the very verge of slumber. Then he would wake up and try to think about things. Why was he, Phineas Finn, an Irishman from Killaloe, living in that great house of Loughlinter as though he were one of the family, striving to kill the hours, and feeling that he was in some way subject to the dominion of his host ? Would it not be better for him to get up and go away ? In his heart of hearts he did not like Mr. Kennedy, though he believed him to be a good man. And of what service to him was it to like Lady Laura, now that Lady Laura was a possession in the hands of Mr. Kennedy ? Then he would tell himself that he owed his position in the world entirely to Lady Laura, and that he was ungrateful to feel himself ever dull in her society. And, moreover, there was something to be done in the world beyond making love and being merry. Mr. Kennedy could occupy himself with a blue book for hours together without wincing. So Phineas went to work again with his Alison, and read away till he nodded.

In those days he often wandered up and down the Linter and across the moor to the Linn, and so down to the lake. He would take a book with him, and would seat himself down on spots which he loved, and would pretend to read ;—but I do not think that he got much advantage from his book. He was thinking of his life, and trying to calculate whether the wonderful success which he had achieved would ever be of permanent value to him. Would he be nearer to earning his bread when he should be member for Loughton than he had been when he was member for Loughshane ? Or was there before him any slightest probability that he would ever earn his bread ? And then he thought of Violet Effingham, and was angry with himself for remembering at that moment that Violet Effingham was the mistress of a large fortune.

Once before when he was sitting beside the Linter he had made up his mind to declare his passion to Lady Laura ;—and he had done so on the very spot. Now, within a twelvemonth of that time, he made up his mind on the same spot to declare his passion to Miss Effing-

ham, and he thought his best mode of carrying his suit would be to secure the assistance of Lady Laura. Lady Laura, no doubt, had been very anxious that her brother should marry Violet; but Lord Chiltern, as Phineas knew, had asked for Violet's hand twice in vain; and, moreover, Chiltern himself had declared to Phineas that he would never ask for it again. Lady Laura, who was always reasonable, would surely perceive that there was no hope of success for her brother. That Chiltern would quarrel with him,—would quarrel with him to the knife,—he did not doubt; but he felt that no fear of such a quarrel as that should deter him. He loved Violet Effingham, and he must indeed be pusillanimous if, loving her as he did, he was deterred from expressing his love from any fear of a suitor whom she did not favour. He would not willingly be untrue to his friendship for Lady Laura's brother. Had there been a chance for Lord Chiltern he would have abstained from putting himself forward. But what was the use of his abstaining, when by doing so he could in no wise benefit his friend,—when the result of his doing so would be that some interloper would come in and carry off the prize? He would explain all this to Lady Laura, and, if the prize would be kind to him, he would disregard the anger of Lord Chiltern, even though it might be anger to the knife.

As he was thinking of all this Lady Laura stood before him where he was sitting at the top of the falls. At this moment he remembered well all the circumstances of the scene when he had been there with her at his last visit to Loughlinter. How things had changed since then! Then he had loved Lady Laura with all his heart, and he had now already brought himself to regard her as a discreet matron whom to love would be almost as unreasonable as though he were to entertain a passion for the Lord Chancellor. The reader will understand how thorough had been the cure effected by Lady Laura's marriage and the interval of a few months, when the swain was already prepared to make this lady the depositary of his confidence in another matter of love. "You are often here, I suppose?" said Lady Laura, looking down upon him as he sat upon the rock.

"Well;—yes; not very often; I come here sometimes because the view down upon the lake is so fine."

"It is the prettiest spot about the place. I hardly ever get here now. Indeed this is only the second time that I have been up since we have been at home, and then I came to bring papa here." There was a little wooden seat near to the rock upon which Phineas had been lying, and upon this Lady Laura sat down. Phineas, with his eyes turned upon the lake, was considering how he might introduce the subject of his love for Violet Effingham; but he did not find the matter very easy. He had just resolved to begin by saying that Violet would certainly never accept Lord Chiltern, when Lady Laura spoke a word or two which stopped him altogether. "How well I

remember," she said, "the day when you and I were here last autumn!"

"So do I. You told me then that you were going to marry Mr. Kennedy. How much has happened since then!"

"Much indeed! Enough for a whole life-time. And yet how slow the time has gone!"

"I do not think it has been slow with me," said Phineas.

"No; you have been active. You have had your hands full of work. I am beginning to think that it is a great curse to have been born a woman."

"And yet I have heard you say that a woman may do as much as a man."

"That was before I had learned my lesson properly. I know better than that now. Oh dear! I have no doubt it is all for the best as it is, but I have a kind of wish that I might be allowed to go out and milk the cows."

"And may you not milk the cows if you wish it, Lady Laura?"

"By no means;—not only not milk them, but hardly look at them. At any rate, I must not talk about them." Phineas of course understood that she was complaining of her husband and hardly knew how to reply to her. He had been sharp enough to perceive already that Mr. Kennedy was an autocrat in his own house, and he knew Lady Laura well enough to be sure that such masterdom would be very irksome to her. But he had not imagined that she would complain to him. "It was so different at Saulsby," Lady Laura continued. "Everything there seemed to be my own."

"And everything here is your own."

"Yes,—according to the prayer-book. And everything in truth is my own,—as all the dainties at the banquet belonged to Sancho the Governor."

"You mean," said he,—and then he hesitated; "you mean that Mr. Kennedy stands over you, guarding you for your own welfare, as the doctor stood over Sancho and guarded him?"

There was a pause before she answered,—a long pause, during which he was looking away over the lake, and thinking how he might introduce the subject of his love. But long as was the pause, he had not begun when Lady Laura was again speaking. "The truth is, my friend," she said, "that I have made a mistake."

"A mistake?"

"Yes, Phineas, a mistake. I have blundered as fools blunder, thinking that I was clever enough to pick my footsteps aright without asking counsel from any one. I have blundered and stumbled and fallen, and now I am so bruised that I am not able to stand upon my feet." The word that struck him most in all this was his own Christian name. She had never called him Phineas before. He was aware that the circle of his acquaintance had fallen into a way of mis-

calling him by his Christian name, as one observes to be done now and again in reference to some special young man. Most of the men whom he called his friends called him Phineas. Even the Earl had done so more than once on occasions in which the greatness of his position had dropped for a moment out of his mind. Mrs. Low had called him Phineas when she regarded him as her husband's most cherished pupil; and Mrs. Bunce had called him Mr. Phineas. He had always been Phineas to everybody at Killaloe. But still he was quite sure that Lady Laura had never so called him before. Nor would she have done so now in her husband's presence. He was sure of that also.

"You mean that you are unhappy?" he said, still looking away from her towards the lake.

"Yes, I do mean that. Though I do not know why I should come and tell you so,—except that I am still blundering and stumbling, and have fallen into a way of hurting myself at every step."

"You can tell no one who is more anxious for your happiness," said Phineas.

"That is a very pretty speech, but what would you do for my happiness? Indeed, what is it possible that you should do? I mean it as no rebuke when I say that my happiness or unhappiness is a matter as to which you will soon become perfectly indifferent."

"Why should you say so, Lady Laura?"

"Because it is natural that it should be so. You and Mr. Kennedy might have been friends. Not that you will be, because you are unlike each other in all your ways. But it might have been so."

"And are not you and I to be friends?" he asked.

"No. In a very few months you will not think of telling me what are your desires or what your sorrows;—and as for me, it will be out of the question that I should tell mine to you. How can you be my friend?"

"If you were not quite sure of my friendship, Lady Laura, you would not speak to me as you are speaking now." Still he did not look at her, but lay with his face supported on his hands, and his eyes turned away upon the lake. But she, where she was sitting, could see him, and was aided by her sight in making comparisons in her mind between the two men who had been her lovers,—between him whom she had taken and him whom she had left. There was something in the hard, dry, unsympathising, unchanging virtues of her husband which almost revolted her. He had not a fault, but she had tried him at every point and had been able to strike no spark of fire from him. Even by disobeying she could produce no heat,—only an access of firmness. How would it have been with her had she thrown all ideas of fortune to the winds, and linked her lot to that of the young Phœbus who was lying at her feet? If she had ever loved any one she had loved him. And she had not thrown away her love

for money. So she swore to herself over and over again, trying to console herself in her cold unhappiness. She had married a rich man in order that she might be able to do something in the world;—and now that she was this rich man's wife she found that she could do nothing. The rich man thought it to be quite enough for her to sit at home and look after his welfare. In the meantime young Phœbus,—her Phœbus as he had been once,—was thinking altogether of some one else.

"Phineas," she said, slowly, "I have in you such perfect confidence that I will tell you the truth;—as one man may tell it to another. I wish you would go from here."

"What, at once?"

"Not to-day, or to-morrow. Stay here now till the election; but do not return. He will ask you to come, and press you hard, and will be hurt;—for, strange to say, with all his coldness, he really likes you. He has a pleasure in seeing you here. But he must not have that pleasure at the expense of trouble to me."

"And why is it a trouble to you?" he asked. Men are such fools;—so awkward, so unready, with their wits ever behind the occasion by a dozen seconds or so! As soon as the words were uttered, he knew that they should not have been spoken.

"Because I am a fool," she said. "Why else? Is not that enough for you?"

"Laura—," he said.

"No,—no; I will have none of that. I am a fool, but not such a fool as to suppose that any cure is to be found there."

"Only say what I can do for you, though it be with my entire life, and I will do it."

"You can do nothing,—except to keep away from me."

"Are you earnest in telling me that?" Now at last he had turned himself round and was looking at her, and as he looked he saw the hat of a man appearing up the path, and immediately afterwards the face. It was the hat and face of the laird of Loughlinter. "Here is Mr. Kennedy," said Phineas, in a tone of voice not devoid of dismay and trouble.

"So I perceive," said Lady Laura. But there was no dismay or trouble in the tone of her voice.

In the countenance of Mr. Kennedy, as he approached closer, there was not much to be read,—only, perhaps, some slight addition of gloom, or rather, perhaps, of that frigid propriety of moral demeanour for which he had always been conspicuous, which had grown upon him at his marriage, and which had been greatly increased by the double action of being made a Cabinet Minister and being garrotted. "I am glad that your headache is better," he said to his wife, who had risen from her seat to meet him. Phineas also had risen, and was now looking somewhat sheepish where he stood.

"I came out because it was worse," she said. "It irritated me so that I could not stand the house any longer."

"I will send to Callender for Dr. Macnuthrie."

"Pray do nothing of the kind, Robert. I do not want Dr. Macnuthrie at all."

"Where there is illness, medical advice is always expedient."

"I am not ill. A headache is not illness."

"I had thought it was," said Mr. Kennedy, very drily.

"At any rate, I would rather not have Doctor Macnuthrie."

"I am sure it cannot do you any good to climb up here in the heat of the sun. Had you been here long, Finn?"

"All the morning;—here, or hereabouts. I clambered up from the lake and had a book in my pocket."

"And you happened to come across him by accident?" Mr. Kennedy asked. There was something so simple in the question that its very simplicity proved that there was no suspicion.

"Yes;—by chance," said Lady Laura. "But every one at Lough-linter always comes up here. If any one ever were missing whom I wanted to find, this is where I should look."

"I am going on towards Linter forest to meet Blane," said Mr. Kennedy. Blane was the gamekeeper. "If you don't mind the trouble, Finn, I wish you'd take Lady Laura down to the house. Do not let her stay out in the heat. I will take care that somebody goes over to Callender for Dr. Macnuthrie." Then Mr. Kennedy went on, and Phineas was left with the charge of taking Lady Laura back to the house. When Mr. Kennedy's hat had first appeared coming up the walk, Phineas had been ready to proclaim himself prepared for any devotion in the service of Lady Laura. Indeed, he had begun to reply with criminal tenderness to the indiscreet avowal which Lady Laura had made to him. But he felt now, after what had just occurred in the husband's presence, that any show of tenderness,—of criminal tenderness,—was impossible. The absence of all suspicion on the part of Mr. Kennedy had made Phineas feel that he was bound by all social laws to refrain from such tenderness. Lady Laura began to descend the path before him without a word;—and went on, and on, as though she would have reached the house without speaking, had he not addressed her. "Does your head still pain you?" he asked.

"Of course it does."

"I suppose he is right in saying that you should not be out in the heat."

"I do not know. It is not worth while to think about that. He sends me in, and so of course I must go. And he tells you to take me, and so of course you must take me."

"Would you wish that I should let you go alone?"

"Yes, I would. Only he will be sure to find it out; and you must not tell him that you left me at my request."

"Do you think that I am afraid of him?" said Phineas.

"Yes;—I think you are. I know that I am, and that papa is; and that his mother hardly dares to call her soul her own. I do not know why you should escape."

"Mr. Kennedy is nothing to me."

"He is something to me, and so I suppose I had better go on. And now I shall have that horrid man from the little town pawing me and covering everything with snuff, and bidding me take Scotch physick,—which seems to increase in quantity and nastiness as doses in England decrease. And he will stand over me to see that I take it."

"What;—the doctor from Callender?"

"No;—but Mr. Kennedy will. If he advised me to have a hole in my glove mended, he would ask me before he went to bed whether it was done. He never forgot anything in his life, and was never unmindful of anything. That I think will do, Mr. Finn. You have brought me out from the trees, and that may be taken as bringing me home. We shall hardly get scolded if we part here. Remember what I told you up above. And remember also that it is in your power to do nothing else for me. Good bye." So he turned away towards the lake, and let Lady Laura go across the wide lawn to the house by herself.

He had failed altogether in his intention of telling his friend of his love for Violet, and had come to perceive that he could not for the present carry out that intention. After what had passed it would be impossible for him to go to Lady Laura with a passionate tale of his longing for Violet Effingham. If he were even to speak to her of love at all, it must be quite of another love than that. But he never would speak to her of love; nor,—as he felt quite sure,—would she allow him to do so. But what astounded him most as he thought of the interview which had just passed, was the fact that the Lady Laura whom he had known,—whom he had thought he had known,—should have become so subject to such a man as Mr. Kennedy, a man whom he had despised as being weak, irresolute, and without a purpose! For the day or two that he remained at Loughlinter, he watched the family closely, and became aware that Lady Laura had been right when she declared that her father was afraid of Mr. Kennedy.

"I shall follow you almost immediately," said the Earl confidentially to Phineas, when the candidate for the borough took his departure from Loughlinter. "I don't like to be there just when the election is going on, but I'll be at Saulsby to receive you the day afterwards."

Phineas took his leave from Mr. Kennedy, with a warm expression of friendship on the part of his host, and from Lady Laura with a mere touch of the hand. He tried to say a word; but she was sullen, or, if not, she put on some mood like to sullenness, and said never a word to him.

On the day after the departure of Phineas Finn for Loughton Lady Laura Kennedy still had a headache. She had complained of a headache ever since she had been at Loughlinter, and Dr. Macnuthrie had been over more than once. "I wonder what it is that ails you," said her husband standing over her in her own sitting-room up-stairs. It was a pretty room, looking away to the mountains, with just a glimpse of the lake to be caught from the window, and it had been prepared for her with all the skill and taste of an accomplished upholsterer. She had selected the room for herself soon after her engagement, and had thanked her future husband with her sweetest smile for giving her the choice. She had thanked him and told him that she always meant to be happy,—so happy in that room! He was a man not much given to romance, but he thought of this promise as he stood over her and asked after her health. As far as he could see she had never been even comfortable since she had been at Loughlinter. A shadow of the truth came across his mind. Perhaps his wife was bored. If so, what was to be the future of his life and of hers? He went up to London every year, and to Parliament, as a duty; and then, during some period of the recess, would have his house full of guests,—as another duty. But his happiness was to consist in such hours as these which seemed to inflict upon his wife the penalty of a continual headache. A shadow of the truth came upon him. What if his wife did not like living quietly at home as the mistress of her husband's house? What if a headache was always to be the result of a simple performance of domestic duties?

More than a shadow of the truth had come upon Lady Laura herself. The dark cloud created by the entire truth was upon her, making everything black and wretched around her. She had asked herself a question or two, and had discovered that she had no love for her husband, that the kind of life which he intended to exact from her was insupportable to her, and that she had blundered and fallen in her entrance upon life. She perceived that her father had already become weary of Mr. Kennedy, and that, lonely and sad as he would be at Saulsby by himself, it was his intention to repudiate the idea of making a home at Loughlinter. Yes;—she would be deserted by every one, except of course by her husband; and then—— Then she would throw herself on some early morning into the lake, for life would be insupportable.

"I wonder what it is that ails you," said Mr. Kennedy.

"Nothing serious. One can't always help having a headache, you know."

"I don't think you take enough exercise, Laura. I would propose that you should walk four miles every day after breakfast. I will always be ready to accompany you. I have spoken to Dr. Macnuthrie——"

"I hate Dr. Macnuthrie."

"Why should you hate Dr. Macnuthrie, Laura?"

"How can I tell why? I do. That is quite reason enough why you should not send for him to me."

"You are unreasonable, Laura. One chooses a doctor on account of his reputation in his profession, and that of Dr. Macnuthrie stands high."

"I do not want any doctor."

"But if you are ill, my dear——"

"I am not ill."

"But you said you had a headache. You have said so for the last ten days."

"Having a headache is not being ill. I only wish you would not talk of it, and then perhaps I should get rid of it."

"I cannot believe that. Headache in nine cases out of ten comes from the stomach." Though he said this,—saying it because it was the common-place common-sense sort of thing to say, still at the very moment there was the shadow of the truth before his eyes. What if this headache meant simple dislike to him, and to his modes of life?

"It is nothing of that sort," said Lady Laura, impatient at having her ailment inquired into with so much accuracy.

"Then what is it? You cannot think that I can be happy to hear you complaining of headache every day,—making it an excuse for absolute idleness."

"What is that you want me to do?" she said, jumping up from her seat. "Set me a task, and if I don't go mad over it, I'll get through it. There are the account books. Give them to me. I don't suppose I can see the figures, but I'll try to see them."

"Laura, this is unkind of you,—and ungrateful."

"Of course;—it is everything that is bad. What a pity that you did not find it out last year! Oh dear, oh dear! what am I to do?" Then she threw herself down upon the sofa, and put both her hands up to her temples.

"I will send for Dr. Macnuthrie at once," said Mr. Kennedy walking towards the door very slowly, and speaking as slowly as he walked.

"No;—do no such thing," she said, springing to her feet again and intercepting him before he reached the door. "If he comes, I will not see him. I give you my word that I will not speak to him if he comes. You do not understand," she said; "you do not understand at all."

"What is it that I ought to understand?" he asked.

"That a woman does not like to be bothered."

He made no reply at once, but stood there twisting the handle of the door, and collecting his thoughts. "Yes," said he at last; "I am beginning to find that out;—and to find out also what it is that bothers a woman, as you call it. I can see now what it is that makes

your head ache. It is not the stomach. You are quite right there. It is the prospect of a quiet decent life to which would be attached the performance of certain homely duties. Dr. Macnuthrie is a learned man, but I doubt whether he can do anything for such a malady."

"You are quite right, Robert; he can do nothing."

"It is a malady you must cure for yourself, Laura;—and which is to be cured by perseverance. If you can bring yourself to try——"

"But I cannot bring myself to try at all," she said.

"Do you mean to tell me, Laura, that you will make no effort to do your duty as my wife?"

"I mean to tell you that I will not try to cure a headache by doing sums. That is all that I mean to say at this moment. If you will leave me for awhile, so that I may lie down, perhaps I shall be able to come to dinner." He still hesitated, standing with the door in his hand. "But if you go on scolding me," she continued, "what I shall do is to go to bed directly you go away." He hesitated for a moment longer, and then left the room without another word.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

MR. SLIDE'S GRIEVANCE.

OUR hero was elected member for Loughton without any trouble to him or, as far as he could see, to any one else. He made one speech from a small raised booth that was called a platform, and that was all that he was called upon to do. Mr. Grating made a speech in proposing him, and Mr. Smallribs another in seconding him; and these were all the speeches that were required. The thing seemed to be so very easy that he was afterwards almost offended when he was told that the bill for so insignificant a piece of work came to £247 18s. 9d. He had seen no occasion for spending even the odd forty-seven pounds. But then he was member for Loughton; and as he passed the evening alone at the inn, having dined in company with Messrs. Grating, Smallribs, and sundry other influential electors, he began to reflect that, after all, it was not so very great a thing to be a member of Parliament. It almost seemed that that which had come to him so easily could not be of much value.

On the following day he went to the castle, and was there when the Earl arrived. They two were alone together, and the Earl was very kind to him. "So you had no opponent after all," said the great man of Loughton, with a slight smile.

"Not the ghost of another candidate."

"I did not think there would be. They have tried it once or twice and have always failed. There are only one or two in the place who

like to go one way just because their neighbours go the other. But, in truth, there is no conservative feeling in the place !”

Phineas, although he was at the present moment the member for Loughton himself, could not but enjoy the joke of this. Could there be any liberal feeling in such a place, or, indeed, any political feeling whatsoever? Would not Messrs. Grating and Smallribs have done just the same had it happened that Lord Brentford had been a Tory peer? “They all seemed to be very obliging,” said Phineas, in answer to the Earl.

“Yes, they are. There isn’t a house in the town, you know, let for longer than seven years, and most of them merely from year to year. And, do you know, I haven’t a farmer on the property with a lease,—not one; and they don’t want leases. They know they’re safe. But I do like the people round me to be of the same way of thinking as myself about politics.”

On the second day after dinner,—the last evening of Finn’s visit to Saulsby,—the Earl fell suddenly into confidential conversation about his daughter and his son, and about Violet Effingham. So sudden, indeed, and so confidential was the conversation, that Phineas was almost silenced for awhile. A word or two had been said about Loughlinter, of the beauty of the place and of the vastness of the property. “I am almost afraid,” said Lord Brentford, “that Laura is not happy there.”

“I hope she is,” said Phineas.

“He is so hard and dry, and what I call exacting. That is just the word for it. Now Laura has never been used to that. With me she always had her own way in everything, and I always found her fit to have it. I do not understand why her husband should treat her differently.”

“Perhaps it is the temper of the man.”

“Temper, yes; but what a bad prospect is that for her! And she, too, has a temper, and so he will find if he tries her too far. I cannot stand Loughlinter. I told Laura so fairly. It is one of those houses in which a man cannot call his hours his own. I told Laura that I could not undertake to remain there for above a day or two.”

“It is very sad,” said Phineas.

“Yes, indeed; it is sad for her, poor girl; and very sad for me too. I have no one else but Laura,—literally no one; and now I am divided from her! It seems that she has been taken as much away from me as though her husband lived in China. I have lost them both now!”

“I hope not, my lord.”

“I say I have. As to Chiltern, I can perceive that he becomes more and more indifferent to me every day. He thinks of me only as a man in his way who must die some day and may die soon.”

“You wrong him, Lord Brentford.”

"I do not wrong him at all. Why has he answered every offer I have made him with so much insolence as to make it impossible for me to put myself into further communion with him?"

"He thinks that you have wronged him."

"Yes;—because I have been unable to shut my eyes to his mode of living. I was to go on paying his debts, and taking no other notice whatsoever of his conduct!"

"I do not think he is in debt now."

"Because his sister the other day spent every shilling of her fortune in paying them. She gave him £40,000! Do you think she would have married Kennedy but for that? I don't. I could not prevent her. I had said that I would not cripple my remaining years of life by raising the money, and I could not go back from my word."

"You and Chiltern might raise the money between you."

"It would do no good now. She has married Mr. Kennedy, and the money is nothing to her or to him. Chiltern might have put things right by marrying Miss Effingham if he pleased."

"I think he did his best there."

"No;—he did his worst. He asked her to be his wife as a man asks for a railway-ticket or a pair of gloves, which he buys with a price; and because she would not jump into his mouth he gave it up. I don't believe he even really wanted to marry her. I suppose he has some disreputable connection to prevent it."

"Nothing of the kind. He would marry her to-morrow if he could. My belief is that Miss Effingham is sincere in refusing him."

"I don't doubt her sincerity."

"And that she will never change."

"Ah, well; I don't agree with you, and I daresay I know them both better than you do. But everything goes against me. I had set my heart upon it, and therefore of course I shall be disappointed. What is he going to do this autumn?"

"He is yachting now."

"And who are with him?"

"I think the boat belongs to Captain Colepepper."

"The greatest blackguard in all England! A man who shoots pigeons and rides steeple-chases! And the worst of Chiltern is this, that even if he didn't like the man, and if he were tired of this sort of life, he would go on just the same because he thinks it a fine thing not to give way." This was so true that Phineas did not dare to contradict the statement, and therefore said nothing. "I had some faint hope," continued the Earl, "while Laura could always watch him; because, in his way, he was fond of his sister. But that is all over now. She will have enough to do to watch herself!"

Phineas had felt that the Earl had put him down rather sharply when he had said that Violet would never accept Lord Chiltern, and he was therefore not a little surprised when Lord Brentford spoke

again of Miss Effingham the following morning, holding in his hand a letter which he had just received from her. "They are to be at Loughlinter on the tenth," he said, "and she purposes to come here for a couple of nights on her way."

"Lady Baldock and all?"

"Well, yes; Lady Baldock and all. I am not very fond of Lady Baldock, but I will put up with her for a couple of days for the sake of having Violet. She is more like a child of my own now than anybody else. I shall not see her all the autumn afterwards. I cannot stand Loughlinter."

"It will be better when the house is full."

"You will be there, I suppose?"

"Well, no; I think not," said Phineas.

"You have had enough of it, have you?" Phineas made no reply to this, but smiled slightly. "By Jove, I don't wonder at it," said the Earl. Phineas, who would have given all he had in the world to be staying in the same country house with Violet Effingham, could not explain how it had come to pass that he was obliged to absent himself. "I suppose you were asked?" said the Earl.

"Oh, yes, I was asked. Nothing can be kinder than they are."

"Kennedy told me that you were coming as a matter of course."

"I explained to him after that," said Phineas, "that I should not return. I shall go over to Ireland. I have a deal of hard reading to do, and I can get through it there without interruption."

He went up from Saulsby to London on that day, and found himself quite alone in Mrs. Bunce's lodgings. I mean not only that he was alone at his lodgings, but he was alone at his club, and alone in the streets. July was not quite over, and yet all the birds of passage had migrated. Mr. Mildmay, by his short session, had half ruined the London tradesmen, and had changed the summer mode of life of all those who account themselves to be anybody. Phineas, as he sat alone in his room, felt himself to be nobody. He had told the Earl that he was going to Ireland, and to Ireland he must go;—because he had nothing else to do. He had been asked indeed to join one or two parties in their autumn plans. Mr. Monk had wanted him to go to the Pyrenees, and Lord Chiltern had suggested that he should join the yacht;—but neither plan suited him. It would have suited him to be at Loughlinter with Violet Effingham, but Loughlinter was a barred house to him. His old friend, Lady Laura, had told him not to come thither, explaining, with sufficient clearness, her reasons for excluding him from the number of her husband's guests. As he thought of it the past scenes of his life became very marvellous to him. Twelve months since he would have given all the world for a word of love from Lady Laura, and had barely dared to hope that such a word, at some future day, might possibly be spoken. Now such a word had in truth been spoken, and it had come to be simply a trouble to him.

She had owned to him,—for, in truth, such had been the meaning of her warning to him,—that, though she had married another man, she had loved and did love him. But in thinking of this he took no pride in it. It was not till he had thought of it long that he began to ask himself whether he might not be justified in gathering from what happened some hope that Violet also might learn to love him. He had thought so little of himself as to have been afraid at first to press his suit with Lady Laura. Might he not venture to think more of himself, having learned how far he had succeeded?

But how was he to get at Violet Effingham? From the moment at which he had left Saulsby he had been angry with himself for not having asked Lord Brentford to allow him to remain there till after the Baldock party should have gone on to Loughlinter. The Earl, who was very lonely in his house, would have consented at once. Phineas, indeed, was driven to confess to himself that success with Violet would at once have put an end to all his friendship with Lord Brentford;—as also to all his friendship with Lord Chiltern. He would, in such case, be bound in honour to vacate his seat and give back Loughton to his offended patron. But he would have given up much more than his seat for Violet Effingham! At present, however, he had no means of getting at her to ask her the question. He could hardly go to Loughlinter in opposition to the wishes of Lady Laura.

A little adventure happened to him in London which somewhat relieved the dulness of the days of the first week in August. He remained in London till the middle of August, half resolving to rush down to Saulsby when Violet Effingham should be there,—endeavouring to find some excuse for such a proceeding, but racking his brains in vain,—and then there came about his little adventure. The adventure was commenced by the receipt of the following letter:—

“Banner of the People Office,
“3rd August, 186—.

“MY DEAR FINN,

“I must say I think you have treated me badly, and without that sort of brotherly fairness which we on the public press expect from one another. However, perhaps we can come to an understanding, and if so, things may yet go smoothly. Give me a turn and I am not at all adverse to give you one. Will you come to me here, or shall I call upon you?

“Yours always, Q. S.”

Phineas was not only surprised, but disgusted also, at the receipt of this letter. He could not imagine what was the deed by which he had offended Mr. Slide. He thought over all the circumstances of his short connection with the People's Banner, but could remember nothing which might have created offence. But his disgust was greater than his surprise. He thought that he had done nothing and

said nothing to justify Quintus Slide in calling him "dear Finn." He, who had Lady Laura's secret in his keeping, he who hoped to be the possessor of Violet Effingham's affections,—he to be called "dear Finn" by such a one as Quintus Slide! He soon made up his mind that he would not answer the note, but would go at once to the People's Banner office at the hour at which Quintus Slide was always there. He certainly would not write to "dear Slide;" and, until he had heard something more of this cause of offence, he would not make an enemy for ever by calling the man "dear Sir." He went to the office of the People's Banner, and found Mr. Slide ensconced in a little glass cupboard, writing an article for the next day's copy.

"I suppose you're very busy," said Phineas, inserting himself with some difficulty on to a little stool in the corner of the cupboard.

"Not so particular but what I'm glad to see you. You shoot, don't you?"

"Shoot!" said Phineas. It could not be possible that Mr. Slide was intending, after this abrupt fashion, to propose a duel with pistols.

"Grouse and pheasants, and them sort of things?" asked Mr. Slide.

"Oh, ah; I understand. Yes, I shoot sometimes."

"Is it the 12th or 20th for grouse in Scotland?"

"The 12th," said Phineas. "What makes you ask that just now?"

"I'm doing a letter about it,—advising men not to shoot too many of the young birds, and showing that they'll have none next year if they do. I had a fellow here just now who knew all about it, and he put down a lot; but I forgot to make him tell me the day of beginning. What's a good place to date from?"

Phineas suggested Callender or Stirling.

"Stirling's too much of a town, isn't it? Callender sounds better for game, I think."

So the letter which was to save the young grouse was dated from Callender; and Mr. Quintus Slide having written the word, threw down his pen, came off his stool, and rushed at once at his subject.

"Well, now, Finn," he said, "don't you know that you've treated me badly about Loughton?"

"Treated you badly about Loughton!" Phineas, as he repeated the words, was quite in the dark as to Mr. Slide's meaning. Did Mr. Slide intend to convey a reproach because Phineas had not personally sent some tidings of the election to the People's Banner?

"Very badly," said Mr. Slide, with his arms akimbo—"very badly indeed! Men on the press together do expect that they're to be stuck by, and not thrown over. Damn it, I say; what's the good of brotherhood if it ain't to be brotherhood?"

"Upon my word, I don't know what you mean," said Phineas.

"Didn't I tell you that I had Loughton in my hey?" said Quintus.

"Oh—h!"

"It's very well to say ho, and look guilty, but didn't I tell you?"

"I never heard such nonsense in my life."

"Nonsense?"

"How on earth could you have stood for Loughton? What interest would you have had there? You could not even have found an elector to propose you."

"Now, I'll tell you what I'll do, Finn. I think you have thrown me over most shabby, but I won't stand about that. You shall have Loughton this session if you'll promise to make way for me after the next election. If you'll agree to that, we'll have a special leader to say how well Lord What's-his-name has done with the borough; and we'll be your horgan through the whole session."

"I never heard such nonsense in my life. In the first place, Loughton is safe to be in the schedule of reduced boroughs. It will be thrown into the county, or joined with a group."

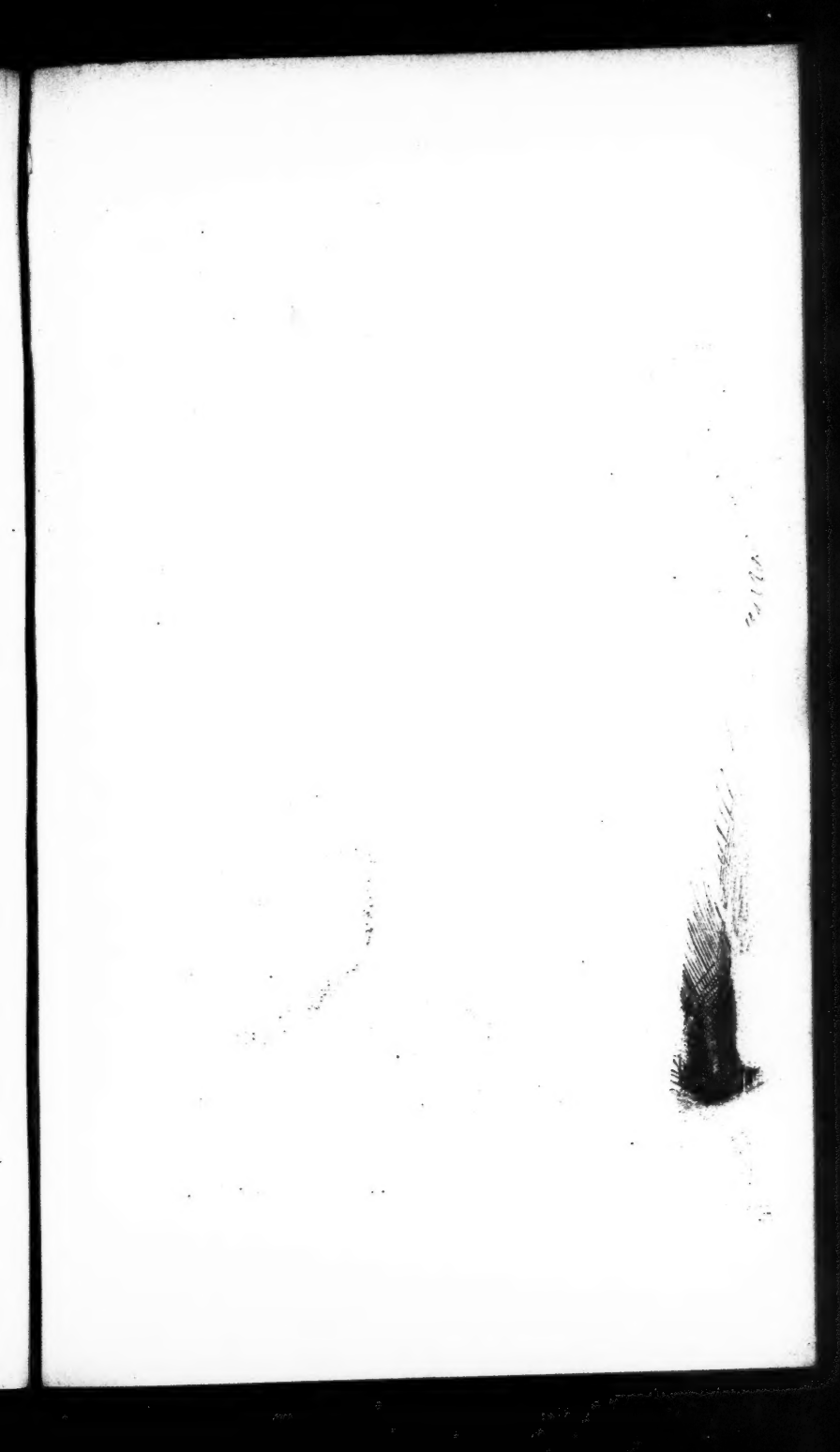
"I'll stand the chance of that. Will you agree?"

"Agree! No! It's the most absurd proposal that was ever made. You might as well ask me whether I would agree that you should go to heaven. Go to heaven if you can, I should say. I have not the slightest objection. But it's nothing to me."

"Very well," said Quintus Slide. "Very well! Now we understand each other, and that's all that I desire. I think that I can show you what it is to come among gentlemen of the press, and then to throw them over. Good morning."

Phineas, quite satisfied at the result of the interview as regarded himself, and by no means sorry that there should have arisen a cause of separation between Mr. Quintus Slide and his "dear Finn," shook off a little dust from his foot as he left the office of the People's Banner, and resolved that in future he would attempt to make no connection in that direction. As he returned home he told himself that a member of Parliament should be altogether independent of the press. On the second morning after his meeting with his late friend, he saw the result of his independence. There was a startling article, a tremendous article, showing the pressing necessity of immediate reform, and proving the necessity by an illustration of the borough-mongering rottenness of the present system. When such a patron as Lord Brentford,—himself a Cabinet Minister with a sinecure,—could by his mere word put into the House such a stick as Phineas Finn,—a man who had struggled to stand on his legs before the Speaker, but had wanted both the courage and the capacity, nothing further could surely be wanted to prove that the Reform Bill of 1832 required to be supplemented by some more energetic measure.

Phineas laughed as he read the article, and declared to himself that the joke was a good joke. But, nevertheless, he suffered. Mr. Quintus Slide, when he was really anxious to use his thong earnestly, could generally raise a wale.





"I do not choose that there should be a riot here."